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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

ON Sunday the German people will register their votes for Herr Hitler as Reichsführer. He is, of course, assured of a vast backing, though under the prevailing regimentation of opinion in the Reich it will have little more significance than the dutiful cheers of schoolchildren for a headmaster. Almost on the eve of the poll the authorities have produced the political "will" of the dead President, wherein he commends his faithful people to the safe keeping of the Reichswehr, sighs for a return to Kaiserdom, and gives his blessing to Hitler. So much has been faked under the Nazi regime that it is not surprising that the authenticity of this document should have been called in question. Like the Reichstag fire, it came at a remarkably opportune moment, and will have the useful effect, no doubt, of strengthening the purpose of waverers who were at best lukewarm towards Hitler but had profound veneration for the old Field-Marshal. It is impossible—and perhaps not very important—to say whether the "will" is genuine, doctored, or manufactured for the occasion; if it is faked its references to the monarchy are curious, and it is difficult to see how they could serve the new President's purpose, except on the far-fetched assumption that he is contemplating a return to Kaiserdom or—farther-fetched still—the founding of a new dynasty in his own person.

The German Church

While all Germany is being drilled for Sunday's plebiscite, the Protestant Church is rent by the protests of a very spirited Opposition. The national Synod, which is said to have been packed by highly unconstitutional dodges, gave retrospective assent to Primate Müller's decrees, and prescribed an oath of allegiance to Hitler which the clergy, like the soldiers, must take. The Opposition will recognise neither the Synod, nor the oath, nor the autocracy of the Nazi Primate. It has written a defiant protest, couched in language that would have delighted Luther, in which it declares that obedience to this autocratic and unevangelical Church is disobedience to God. This Opposition numbers 7,000 pastors, and all of them read the protest from their pulpits last Sunday, save a few who failed to receive it, thanks to the vigilance of the Nazi Post Office.

Russia, League and Pact

The dates and the agenda have now been fixed for the meetings in September of the various organs of the League. None of the business before it competes in importance with the confidently expected application of the Soviet Union for membership. Moscow has been taking soundings, and, in spite of vocal threats from the Swiss, it is unlikely that there will be direct opposition. Poland, however, will probably make difficulties by claiming equality with Russia as a permanent member of the Council, and Spain claims a status equal to Poland's.

One recalls the painful exploit of Brazil which delayed Germany's entry. The graver question is, however, whether Poland and Germany will adhere to the Franco-Russian pact against aggression. France has been putting heavy pressure on her nominal ally to extort from her a reluctant consent, but as yet without definite result. It is possible that Poland may in the end sell her signature for a number of concessions from French finance, for her recent coldness towards Paris is the reflection partly of Colonel Beck's personal feelings, and partly of the unsatisfied hunger of Polish big business for French capital. Support got in this way, if it can be so got, which is doubtful, would be worth little as a buttress for the new system of peace. Berlin has given no sign of modifying its opposition to the pact, and rumour is again busy with the possibility that Poland's attitude is the result of an understanding with Germany.

The Danger in the Far East

The Japanese, through their official spokesman, have launched one of their not infrequent diplomatic offensives against Russia. This may be merely a move in the bargaining to reduce the price which Russia will accept for the Chinese Eastern Railway. But conceivably it might have a more sinister significance. Japan doubtless knows and may exaggerate the difficulties that a poor harvest would make for Russia's defence. In this connection, three articles in the *Times* by a special correspondent in Manchukuo friendly to Japan are of some importance. Notably in their account of the newly constructed strategic railways they bear out the suspicion of the Lytton Commission that the central motive of the Japanese in acquiring Manchuria was strategical. The decision of the Federation of British Industries to send a strong delegation to inquire into the future of British trade in this region is politically of some importance. Trade prospects are not bright, for, as the *Times* correspondent admits, the policy of the Japanese is monopoly for their own trade, with crude oil, tobacco and possibly gold mining as the only likely exceptions. Clearly the business calculation is that the only chance for the desired expansion of British trade lies in a political rapprochement, which means certainly further treason to the League and the cause of disarmament, and probably neutrality benevolent to Japan in the contest with Russia for which she is preparing.

The Facts of the Austrian "Putsch"

The new Fascist Government of Austria is presumably preparing some diplomatic move by the visits which Chancellor Schuschnigg has paid to Budapest, and Vice-Chancellor Starhemberg to Mussolini at Ostia. It wants at least permission to retain its armed forces at their present expanded level, and probably also the right to use aircraft and other arms forbidden by the Peace Treaties. It is said that Italy will send Signor Suvich as a special ambassador to Vienna to balance Herr von Papen, whose *agrément* has been grudgingly granted. Meanwhile, the trials and executions of the Nazi conspirators are concluded: the evidence leaves a bewildering impression that the truth about this affair has been heavily clouded by the official news. It seems, as we guessed, likely that Hitler did not order the *putsch*, though his lieutenants in Munich certainly did. On the contrary, Dr. Rintelen and the Austrian Nazis probably acted because they foresaw that Hitler, turning to the right, must presently withdraw his financial support, and break up the Austrian legion. Major Fey's behaviour seems more than suspect. He was warned through his adjutant of the *putsch* two hours before it occurred, and took no steps to protect the Chancellery. He seems to have been ready to serve as Vice-Chancellor to Dr. Rintelen. Finally, one asks how Dr. Rintelen came by his wound while in custody. The story of attempted suicide is not convincing. Two rival cliques of Fascists were struggling for power, equally unscrupulous, and apt to drift from one camp to the other.

Silver and Public Works in the U.S.A.

All sorts of rumours and prognostications were aroused by President Roosevelt's action in nationalising the supplies of silver in the United States, and the effect of these rumours was a fall in the gold value of the dollar—and also in its sterling value—and a cessation of the movement of gold to the United States. There was talk of a coming inflation and of a determination to force down the exchange value of the dollar in a further attempt to raise prices. Second thoughts have made most of the prophets a good deal more hesitant. The acquisition of the stocks of silver in the United States—or even considerable purchase of silver abroad—would not greatly affect President Roosevelt's power to manipulate the American price-level, or to bring about inflation; for he had the power to do this already, as far as it depends on printing more money. Certainly, the basis of the American currency has been somewhat enlarged, and can now be enlarged further without draining gold away from Europe. But no one really knows whether a fall in the dollar is to be engineered from Washington or not. The importance of the President's move is primarily political; it is an attempt to placate the silver interests and take the sting out of their agitation. Meanwhile, the reorganisation of the New Deal goes on. Firms in very small towns have been relieved from the obligation to abide by the N.R.A. codes; and a fresh intensification of the public works programme has been announced with a view to the coming winter. There is to be another outpouring of money for relief to farmers, who are no better off for the rise in crop prices when they have no crops to sell. It looks as if the President's main reliance for the winter will be on increasing purchasing power through relief to farmers and a larger Federal expenditure on public works.

Miners' Wages

The South Wales miners have this week given notice to terminate their existing wage agreement. Last week the Coal Mines National Industrial Board, to which the miners had referred their claims for improved conditions, issued a report recommending that a part of their demands should be granted. The Board, which was set up under the Labour Government's Coal Mines Act, has no power to make its recommendations effective; and the owners have always refused to recognise it. On this occasion the South Wales owners refused to appear before it in order to argue their case. The miners, therefore, after the issue of the Board's report, applied for a joint meeting with the owners to discuss their claims in the light of the Board's views. But the owners, it appeared, were away

on holiday, and could not arrange to meet before September 18th, thus gaining yet another month by the same delaying tactics as they have systematically pursued in the past. The South Wales Miners' Federation retaliated by giving a month's notice from September 1st to end the present agreement, in order to set a limit to the further dragging out of the negotiations. This is in turn a threat to strike at the beginning of October; but there is still time for agreement to be reached. The real question at issue is whether, in face of the improved situation of the coal industry in South Wales, the special wage reductions made in the emergency of 1931 are to remain in force. The Industrial Board, which was established as an impartial tribunal of reference, has given partial support to the men's case; and it seems clear that a minimum which is only 12½ per cent. above that of 1914 is desperately low in relation to present costs and conditions of living.

One Transport Union?

The railwaymen, under the settlement reached last week-end, have at least got back a part of the special wage-reductions which they were compelled to accept after the financial crisis. To most people, it will be disappointing that they have not regained more, though certain representatives of railway shareholders have raised a loud outcry against their getting anything at all. The position of the railways has substantially improved during the past year, and something—in fact, a good deal—has been done to remove the handicap imposed on the railways by the absence of any effective scales of wages for road transport workers. The agreement, made a week ago in accordance with the fair wages clause of the Road and Rail Transport Act of 1933, sets up rates for road transport which are clearly meant to be analogous to railway rates for similar work. This removes one of the arguments most used by the railway companies in urging the continuance of the "cuts," but the lack of co-ordination between road and rail still remains a complicating factor.

* * *

It is then not surprising that this week's conference of the National Union of Railwaymen should have approved in principle a proposal for the organisation of all transport workers in a single inclusive Trade Union. There are big difficulties in the way. The separate unions of locomotive men and clerical workers on the railways have never been prepared to merge their identities in the N.U.R., which has always aimed at including all railway workers. Moreover, the Transport and General Workers' Union, which includes most of the organised road transport workers, has also sections catering for flour millers, tinplate workers, quarry-men, agricultural workers, and a large number of other "general" occupations. The N.U.R. wants the proposed inclusive Union to be confined to transport workers; but will the T. and G.W.U. consent to be split in half, and to resign its "general" membership? A close working arrangement between these two big Unions should be practicable; but there is not much chance for a scheme for a positive amalgamation.

What a Man Needs

We have been sent by the Committee against Malnutrition (19C Eagle Street, Holborn, London), the copy of a letter which was recently published in a number of medical journals and newspapers, signed by fourteen persons all of whom are experts in some medical or scientific field. The letter, as the Committee points out, is a scientific statement which the general public should study for itself. It has reference to the responsibility of the Unemployment Assistance Board, under the new Unemployment Act, for providing relief to the unemployed man and his family, "determined"—we quote the Act—"by reference to his needs, including the needs of any members of the household . . . who are dependent upon him." The definition of needs is left, of course, to the Board to determine; they fall into five categories: (1) food, (2) rent, (3) fuel, (4) clothing, (5) light, cleansing materials and sundries. The letter points out that in regard to food scientific knowledge has reached a point where it is possible pretty accurately to determine a minimum (vide the B.M.A. and M.O.H. Committees), and proceeds from this to the important suggestion that the requisites of the other categories should be similarly investigated and an agreed standard fixed. "An adequate expenditure on food," it is added, "will only be secured if some margin is allowed for the small conventional necessities of civilised life." This, really, is the essence of the matter; and seeing that there are undoubtedly many families in this country to-day living below the agreed minimum diet standard, which is assessed without reference to three other "conventional necessities," it seems clear that the incidence of malnutrition must be fairly high. Since the British Association last year passed a resolution urging closer co-operation between science and Government, British scientists have made no more valuable contribution to practical, social and economic problems.

News and the B.B.C.

The appointment of Professor John Coatman to the position of News Editor of the B.B.C. is understood to be the prelude to considerable developments in the handling of wireless news bulletins. Professor Coatman should have a very great opportunity. The reporting of news on the radio remains at present in a primitive, colourless stage, obviously capable of immense improvements. Experiments made in the Saturday evening programmes last autumn suggested several exciting lines of development, and there are innumerable other possible directions in which development might go. Well handled, and extended to anything approaching its full possibilities, the broadcast news-service might become a really important factor in the national life. But that it would seriously damage newspaper sales we greatly doubt: it was alleged when radio started that the broadcasting of music would empty concert-halls and ruin the gramophone trade, whereas something like the opposite turned out to be true. A well-edited news-service might, however, have the effect of compelling an improvement in newspaper standards of choice and presentation. Indeed, assuming that the B.B.C. would decline to compromise on its standard of taste and its sense of proportion in these matters, it is quite conceivable that eventually the public would be trained to demand something rather less silly and sensational than it nowadays gets in its morning and evening papers.

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LIBERTY AND "MARXISM"

HAVE the younger among us who "toy with Marxism" a right to stand in line with "liberals" in the battle to defend liberty of opinion? Since Mr. Keynes raised this provocative but important question in his letter on the case of Professor Laski in our issue of July 21st, numerous correspondents have taken up his challenge. The question is a fair one and worth discussing, since it may lead us all to define our views on political liberty more clearly and champion it more energetically. Stated as an aside in a brilliant letter on academic freedom, the question in its first form lacked precision. What is meant by "toying with Marxism"? One may have found in the writings of Marx an immense stimulus; one may broadly accept, though one may wish to define it afresh, his view of history; one may agree with his objective, the creation of a classless society. Those of us who are in this case will still claim our right to stand in the ranks of those who battle for liberty. One might go on to ask for a definition of "Marxism." Even those who treat Marx as the schoolmen treated Saint Thomas are divided into several sects. It is probable that the views of Marx and Engels about democracy and dictatorship underwent some changes during their lifetime, and after spending some time in trying to arrive at them, we should hesitate to state them dogmatically. Whether Russian practice has been in line with Marxist theory is endlessly debatable. We will suppose, then, that Mr. Keynes was using the word "Marxist" loosely to name a tendency. It is true in any case that those who have in any degree opened their minds to Socialist thinking under the influence of Marx cannot think of liberty precisely as liberals have done in the past.

Lenin, with his customary roughness, said that "liberty is a bourgeois illusion." That sounds unpromising. But we need hardly go farther than Professor Laski's case to get a hint of his meaning. Academic freedom is a great ideal, and in some degree a great possession. It is observed over a wide range of issues and in our greater Universities frequently tolerated even where the central interests of the propertied class are involved. The significance of the attack upon Professor Laski was that even this, one would have thought the most firmly entrenched of our liberties, was discovered to be in danger. The Member for Parliament for his University even proposed to apply economic pressure in order to silence or get rid of an academic teacher of high distinction because his voice was influential and his views distasteful to the propertied class. We have here a hint of the precarious nature of our liberties; we hold them, our rulers seem anxious to remind us, only as long as we do not use them effectively.

The legal right to express freely the most unorthodox opinions certainly exists and has recently been forcibly reiterated by one of His Majesty's judges. But it is easily possible to exaggerate the value of this legal freedom. A man who openly expresses such views as Professor Laski is supposed to have expressed would find it extremely difficult to make his way in business, would be debarred from most types of public employment and would find himself handicapped even in the professions. The wealthy men who have careers, honours and employments in their gift frown upon such heretics and ostracise them. If this is broadly true of the highly educated few, it is much more obviously true of the mass of average men. When we consider the clerical class, still largely unorganised, we are aware of thousands who hardly dare to harbour "dangerous thoughts," much less to express them, lest they incur the displeasure of employers, customers or clients. In so far as the manual workers have emancipated themselves from this continuous pressure, it is because they work in masses, with a strong Trade Union behind them. But they find, as we have seen in a number of recent cases, that the law does not necessarily protect them in the exercise of the elementary rights of free speech and public meeting. Moreover, the coercion implicit in poverty and unemployment often seems to them to make talk of equal rights a mockery. They appreciate the irony of the dictum that everyone is "free to dine at the Ritz and own a Rolls-Royce." And as soon as we leave the great industrial areas we discover that in very many areas even the right to vote freely is not a reality. Apart from the fact that property owns nine-tenths or more of the popular press and has the advantage in all the more customary kinds of propaganda, opinion is fettered and democracy thwarted by the patronage and the economic power that the employing class possesses.

The "Marxist" differs from the liberal in that he is aware, and painfully aware, of all this. A Socialist cannot separate "economic reform" and liberty, as Mr. Keynes seems to do, as two desirable things, the first a good to be won, the second a good to be defended. On the contrary, they are for him inseparables. Liberty, save in the narrow, legal sense, cannot exist in a society based on unequal wealth, and the potentially coercive relationship of employers to employed. That it exists, in any full sense of the word, is, as Lenin said, "a bourgeois illusion." Liberty—which means the conditions under which men may develop and learn and express themselves—is a good to be won, and it can be attained only by "economic reform," or as we should prefer to say, only by a thorough transformation of the economic basis of society.

Are we, then, inconsistent or disingenuous in defending such imperfect liberties (including academic freedom) as do exist in a stratified, capitalist society? By no means. They mean everything for the few, and much even for the many. It is bad that one must brave economic handicaps or penalties in expressing dangerous thoughts, but it would be very much worse if we had also to brave imprisonment or a censorship. One may in complete honesty say that this legal freedom, and this method of counting unfree or partially free heads at elections, is in itself infinitely preferable, and may in fact offer the surest road to a classless society.

The real question turns, as Mr. Keynes put it in his second letter, on our intention to use that road—the "liberal" road as he calls it—and no other. For our own part, we should say, for reasons of morals, as well as of prudence, that we contemplate only the use of the methods of persuasion and election. We uphold the right to the free expression of opinion, even of Fascist opinion, until it takes to the use of violence or constitutes a serious incitement to it. What one might be compelled to do if a Socialist Government were faced with a violent Fascist

movement is another question. Certainly its militant, uniformed organisations would be suppressed. Whether during the period of emergency the power of the platform and the press which money gives them would also be fettered or abolished is a question that admits of no answer in advance, for the severity of police measures must depend on the degree of the physical danger. We confess, even if it be an illiberal confession, that we hold that a democracy should defend itself; we would not imitate the German Republic. But we would add that save under the stress of actual physical opposition we would not curtail the liberty to express any point of view.

If this analysis and attitude comes within Mr. Keynes' definition of Marxism, does its acceptance make it impossible to work for liberty "with a good conscience"? If it is true that liberty for the mass of men and women can come only through the transformation of the economic system and can be a reality only in a classless society, is there not more justification for the counter-question whether any liberal who resists fundamental economic change can defend liberty "with a good conscience"? Actually, however, we do not believe a conflict need exist. For the liberal who genuinely desires liberty not for a class or a section will find himself, as Mr. Keynes does, forced into seeking economic change. The situation is not static—a choice between losing or retaining the measure of liberty we have to-day. The question is of increasing it or losing it altogether. With each economic crisis the powers that be find the growth of Socialist opinion more dangerous and we have had plenty of hints in the Sedition Bill, in the courts and in the growth of Fascist and semi-Fascist organisations, of the kind of counter-attack which the democrat is likely to be faced with. The struggle for liberty will intensify in the future. It will only be lost if the great body of middle-class liberal opinion, stronger in England than any such body in any other country, fails to realise that if it is to preserve liberty it must strive not only to keep the measure of liberty which it has itself achieved in the past for itself, but to extend its benefits more widely to the mass which has never effectively shared in it. The alternative we have seen in Germany—the destruction of the working-class movement, with the help of a frightened middle-class, followed by the destruction of the liberty of the middle-class as well. The middle-class in England need not make that mistake if it will realise freedom means more than the retention of existing forms, that the free discussion which society imperatively needs cannot exist unless we rid ourselves of the handicaps of unequal wealth. Society must be classless if it is to be free.

PROSPERITY AND STRIFE IN PALESTINE

THE annual Memorandum of the Jewish Agency on the development of the Jewish National Home, which was submitted to the Permanent Mandates Commission in June, is full of figures of progress. The Government of Palestine has an accumulated surplus of nearly £2,500,000, and enjoys a unique position of financial security. There was an increase of the Jewish population of Palestine during 1933 of over 29 per cent.; and the registered immigration—which is somewhat less than the actual immigration—was over 30,000. The figures were surpassed in one year only since the British Occupation, in 1925. Of the immigrants, 3,250 entered as "persons of independent means," having a capital of £1,000 or more. In fact, the capital they brought was about £7,000,000. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that nearly £3,000,000 was spent during the year on building alone, while the deposits in the banks are estimated to have risen from £7,500,000 to £12,500,000. The development of agriculture is shown by the rapidly increasing export of oranges, which rose to 5,000,000 cases—an addition of a million on the previous year—representing a value of £2,500,000; and by the increase in the area under plantation, which has been multiplied tenfold during the last ten years. As to the development of industry, nearly 600 new establishments were opened during 1933; and in the period 1930–1933 the number of industrial enterprises rose from 2,500 to 3,500, while the capital investment and the annual output were doubled. Despite the opening of the Harbour at Haifa and the rapid progress in the laying of the oil pipeline to that port, Tel Aviv maintains its position as the principal industrial town. Its population has risen to 80,000; and its municipal budget, much greater than that of any other town in Palestine, amounts to nearly £200,000.

The immigration of Jews from Germany is one of the principal factors in this remarkable expansion. But it would be a mistake to think that it is the main cause. The German proportion, which in the previous year had been only three and a half per cent. of the whole, rose to nearly 20 per cent., and the total entry from Germany since the Nazi persecution began is 12,000; but the inflow from Poland remains the largest proportion. It is the cumulative result of Jewish enterprise and resource over a period of years, rather than the sudden accretion of capital, intelligence and method from the German immigrants, that is the main cause of this ever-expanding development. The Jewish Agency holds that immigration, which purports to be based on the country's absorptive capacity, has been too cautiously restricted. There was a marked scarcity of Jewish labour; the supply lagged behind the increasing demand which was created by new investment and the expansion of existing enterprises. The labour shortage has induced a steep increase in wages of Jewish labour, which, for both skilled and unskilled workmen, have risen by about one-third. It has had the undesirable effect, also, of attracting the Jewish workmen from the villages to the towns, and of reducing the already small number of Jews engaged in public works of the Government, because the wage-scale of the Government is less than that of private Jewish enterprise. The Government of Palestine has since recognised the demand for more labour by granting a supplementary Immigration Schedule of 1,200 workers.

Economically, there is no reason to fear any halt in the agricultural or industrial expansion. So experienced and prudent a judge as Sir Herbert Samuel, who revisited in the spring the country where he had been the first High Commissioner, has stated that within the next few years the country, which now has one and a quarter million inhabitants, might accommodate two million.

There is, however, a reverse side of the medal. With the remarkable development of economic prosperity there has not come an increase of social and of what may be called international peace, that is, peace between Arabs and Jews. Last October there were violent clashes of the Arabs with the police in Jerusalem, Jaffa and Haifa, arising out of demonstrations against the increased Jewish immigration. Through the firm measures taken by the Government the riots did not become inter-racial conflicts, but they indicate that the Arab political leaders are prepared at any opportunity to resist with violence the upbuilding of the Jewish National Home. The Government has sought to strengthen the protection for the Arab cultivator and agricultural tenant by legislation and by provision in the new £2,000,000 loan of funds both for resettlement of Arabs displaced from the land and for agricultural credits. It has, too, taken steps to reform local government by an Ordinance which provides a broader franchise for the Palestinian municipalities. The municipal elections will be held during the latter part of this year, and it

will be possible to see how the two communities react towards popular representation. The result of that experience may determine the policy with regard to the proposal to set up a legislative Council of elected members. But government action cannot bring about peace: at best it can avert open conflict.

There can be little hope of understanding between the Jewish and the Arab leaders. Jewish economic development enhances and does not threaten the well-being of the Arab; but it does threaten the domination of the leading Arab families. Any understanding must be built up from the bottom, not by any political formula but by a greater recognition of community of interests on the part of the workers. For that the Jewish Labour Party, which genuinely favours Arab-Jewish co-operation, must be prepared to take the long view and further the employment of Arab workers in Jewish enterprises. It can be proved that the Arab workmen indirectly benefit by Jewish enterprise. But that is not enough to found goodwill. It is rather by direct collaboration, in the literal sense, that the two peoples will come to an understanding of a common Palestinian loyalty and a common social outlook. That would be the best security against the violent clash which, in spite of the British garrison, some who have long experience of the country still fear.

The other cause of strife is more recent and more disturbing. It is that between the extreme Jewish Nationalist section, known as the Revisionists—because they desire a revision of the Mandatory policy by way of active building up of a Jewish majority—and the general body of the Zionists, and particularly the Federation of Labour. The Revisionists, like the Fascists of other countries, are aggressive in their nationalism and are violently opposed to Socialism. They feed on the discontents of a part of the people with the cautious attitude of the Mandatory Power; and they imitate the methods of the Fascists in Europe. The feeling between them and the main body, which was previously strained, was embittered by the murder last June of the Zionist leader, Arlosoroff, and the arrest of three Revisionists charged with complicity in the crime. The long-drawn legal proceedings aggravated the passions on both sides. Now that they have ended in the acquittal, on legal grounds, of the three accused, it should be possible to work for internal peace within the community. In spite of the strong undercurrent of strife, Palestine makes the impression on its visitors, whether Jews or Gentiles, of a country full of vitality and hopefulness. The creative spirit, which is strong in the people, gives assurance that the economic prosperity will continue; and, if wise counsels prevail, it will be more firmly based on reconciliation between Jew and Jew and on co-operation between Jew and Arab.

A LONDON DIARY

LOOKING through the Second Brown Book of the Hitler Terror (Lane, 7*s.* 6*d.*), I see that it has the great merits of the First Brown Book and some of its defects as well. As Dimitrov says in his introduction, the facts in the first Brown Book were so important that it could not be neglected by the Leipzig Court—it became a "sixth accused." Its testimony was as unshaken as Dimitrov's; the trial established its substantial truth in the eyes of reasonable men. The new Brown Book is even better documented and I should be surprised if efforts to refute its charges as "propagandist lies" are more successful than they were in the case of its predecessor. Its climax is a plan showing how all the evidence about the origin of the Reichstag Fire leads to Göring. The main defect of the book is that it contains much too much propagandist matter. No working class leader has ever won so much respectful attention from the *bourgeoisie* as Georgi Dimitrov. A dignified introduction by him which did not go beyond the facts but which stated in bald terms his own interpretation of them would have been the most effective possible revolutionary propaganda. By dropping into the usual clichés about the "conduct of the bourgeois who lash like monsters about them when their end is near," and by denouncing the "shameful role" of the leaders of social democracy without making any dispassionate effort to apportion the blame for failure in Germany between the Communists and the Social Democrats, Dimitrov weakens his case. It is a good rule that if your case is good, you should let the facts speak for themselves; if your case is bad, you may be as verbose as Goebbels or Göring. In this instance, the case is so good and the facts so telling that they will survive some unnecessary comment.

* * *

I am sorry that the B.B.C. has given way about the 24-hour clock, because it was a sensible little effort at international co-operation and because it is always a pity when prejudice wins a point over common sense. Some of the opposition from correspondents in the popular press has been comic beyond description, and comparable only to the "give us back our eleven days" agitation when the Calendar was reformed in the eighteenth century. But the real trouble has been lack of support from other national organisations. According to the B.B.C. itself, it has received no very emphatic declaration of opinion from the public, either for or against. But since the Government—at whose request, by the way, it is understood that the experiment was undertaken—intimated that there would be no official adoption of the scheme, its continuance by the B.B.C. alone seemed rather pointless. So, except perhaps in the teashops of an enterprising multiple catering firm which announced that it was adopting the 24-hour clock, we are to be left to muddle along in the same old way, and patriotic clubmen will be able to put their hands on their hearts and thank God that we are not as other nations are. It took a war to give us the boon of Daylight Saving. Presumably we shall now have to wait till another to give us the 24-hour clock. It seems rather an expensive method of progress.

* * *

On my way to the dentist yesterday, I found the street being torn up by an electric pick. I telephoned to cancel the appointment. But I read that a silencer for these infernal machines has been invented, and I pray it may quickly be made compulsory. The Ministry of Transport is about to apply an Order regulating the use of motor-horns in certain localities, and the L.C.C. has made bylaws prohibiting petrol-stations in some places, and requiring the use in others of a standard pattern for signs. In fact, we are witnessing a mild attack on the right of people to make nuisances of themselves, and it may develop into a fine general assault on the whole principle that traders are entitled to boost their wares regardless of anything except their own profits. The good work done by Scapa in clearing the countryside of hoardings needs more support from the law. Some owners of petrol-stations no doubt sin from poverty and ignorance rather than iniquity, but a lot of the big advertisers must be merely cynical, and I wish I could plaster the parks where some of our great brewers live, with their own delightful posters. I notice, too, that the American habit of trying to bully the public into purchasing is on the increase here. One soap-manufacturer is covering the hoardings with pictures intended to persuade us that unawares we smell. "B.O." (Body Odour) is the refined term he uses to terrorise us. I do not know how a law could be drafted to prevent such methods of advertisement, but to try to increase unnecessary anxiety seems to me violently anti-social.

* * *

There are some romantics who believe that noise and ugliness are modern innovations. They have a notion of the past based on pictures and poetry, and fancy that in the Merrie England of Chaucer or Shakespeare or Gainsborough there was nothing to affront the ear or exacerbate the eye. Actually, one dray on cobblestones makes a far more distracting noise than the steady hum of modern traffic, and anyone who could revisit the past would be appalled by the squalor, the brutality

and the suffering. The Orient still is often picturesque enough, but after a while the constant spectacle of persons without legs or without eyes or without noses becomes intolerable. Rowlandson's drawings show that Eighteenth Century London was similarly repulsive, and Smollett gives an even more horrifying picture of English life in his time. He was a man cursed with twentieth-century susceptibilities. But if he had been born a hundred and seventy years later, he would probably write indignantly about petrol-pumps and motor-horns, and long nostalgically for the repose and elegance of Georgian London. Presumably in a hundred years our descendants will be sighing with regret over the quaint slow ways and old-world dignity of the Nineteen-Thirties; above all, probably, for the fantastic variety and absence of standardisation in our lives. But if a visitor from the future arrived to see us as we are, he would be glad to get back to the Twenty-first century. At least I hope he would.

* * *

The Ministry of Transport is to be congratulated upon quashing a ridiculous regulation put forward by the Thames Conservancy Board forbidding access to their locks to men not wearing "full" bathing or rowing clothes. Apropos of this I heard from a friend who visited the Sunbathing Society's Summer School at Haslemere this week a story which illustrates the ambiguous attitude of the English to nakedness. The Nudists disported themselves in some spacious meadows at the bottom of a deep dell surrounded on every side by pine-covered hills. It would have been difficult to find a spot more secluded from the gaze of unauthorised persons. Through the grounds, however, there runs a path which is, it appears, or at any rate was, a disputed right of way. The path has not been used for years and nobody, so far as I know, has hitherto shown himself anxious to come forward as a champion of possible public rights by walking along it. The Sunbathing Society had not been in possession of the grounds for more than a few days, however, before stray members of the public began to appear on the path, necessitating the erection of elaborate canvas screens to protect the sunbathers from the curious eye. The next step was the lodging of a protest with the police by the pedestrians, on the ground that what they had been able to descry from the path constituted an affront to their decency. The upshot at the time of writing is unknown. What interests me is the state of mind of people who go out of their way with apparently the express purpose of paining themselves by what they see, and then entering a protest against what has caused them pain.

* * *

I have always had my doubts about these conversations "overheard at Lord's," but a friend who frequents cricket matches vouches for the authenticity of the following. The first came from a man with an impeccable University intonation. "It always disgusts me," he said, "to hear cricket talked about in a Scottish accent." The second was a conversation which took place only a few days ago. "What we want," said A, "is a corps of really first-class speakers of the public-school and University type. And they must speak at street corners, not in drawing-rooms. They must go to Stepney and Bow." "Yes," said the other, "but it's no good sending them out now because everyone is away in August."

* * *

The most unscrupulous advertising that I have ever seen anywhere—which is saying a lot—appears in a copy of the *Indian Labour Journal*, which has just been sent to me. A number of patent medicines costing two to three rupees each are advertised. One of them promises to make you "a perfect man in 2 hours. No opium, quite safe." Others promise complete cures of syphilis or gonorrhoea in a few days. But what are we to say to "a few grains" which "shall change your old wife into quite young one in 10 minutes. Quite safe but most certain"? Of the final remedy the advertiser says, "Use it once and your most proud and indifferent darling should be enslaved for ever. A packet of 6 times." Six proud and indifferent darlings?

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Mrs. Jessie Keeling.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

On Wednesday the Westminster Coroner referred to the suicide of Major Rowlandson, of Kenley, Surrey, who shot himself within a few minutes of the time when his insurance policy lapsed, as a "cold-blooded method to defraud the company."—Report in *News Chronicle*.

The modern generation, he continued, was growing up without morals. . . . It was a scandal when they saw young men and women riding along our roads in shorts, and it could end in nothing but a pagan England. Public baths, which to-day were springing up all over the country, were the cause of the ruin of ancient Greece and Rome and they would ruin England.—Mr. J. D. Drysdale at a meeting at the Emmanual Bible College, Birkenhead, in connection with a missionary conference, reported in *Liverpool Daily Post*.

Butcher's Boy, 14–15; ride cycle; must have blood in his veins: mothers' darlings, Cissies, etc., need not apply.—Advertisement in the *Manchester Evening News*.

One of the pleasures of autumnal theatre-going is the visible acreage of exquisitely sunburnt skin in the stalls.—*Evening News*.

It was revealed to-day that G. L. Rampling, who won the quarter mile for England in the British Empire Games in 48 seconds, actually ran a greater distance. . . . For the purposes of record, the track at the White City, London, has been surveyed, and a certificate has been given stating that Rampling actually ran 440 yards three inches. This, of course, makes Rampling's feat all the more meritorious.—*Yorkshire Evening Post*.

Shakespeare, planting his Stratford garden, loved every flower that bloomed, and used gardening metaphors to convey his deeper meanings.—*The Bulletin*.

Westmorland County Council agreed on Friday to reconsider a decision not to have anything to do with a proposal to build a new street at Kendal near Windermere "on the grounds of morality." It was suggested that the present traffic congestion led to profanity among motor drivers. Mr. C. S. Webb said that if the County Council had been in the street that morning they would have been of one mind. There was a hold up of about forty cars. "The language was terrible. I will not tell you what was said. Something should be done on the grounds of morality."—*Worcester Daily Times*.

Don Jaime and Don Gonzalo were devoted to each other in spite of their difference in looks.—*Star*.

Lady Dalrymple-Champneys' butterfly transfer just below her left shoulder was one of the features of the week-end.—*Bystander*.

Buttered eggs, better known as scrambled eggs, are still popular, but fried eggs will be served by smart hostesses, as they are regarded as "newer."—*Daily Telegraph*.

The "Cranford" period is coming into social prominence at the moment. Well-known women are reading Mrs. Gaskell's great classic during their holidays in order to get the right atmosphere for the "Little Season."—*Daily Telegraph*.

A proof that Pacifism is anti-Christian is the fact that Pacifists are invariably Modernists. You never find a Fundamentalist who is a Pacifist. . . .—Correspondent in the *Morning Post*.

He pleaded that justice would be met if the summonses were dismissed on payment of costs, as a conviction might count against his clients in their future life.

Supporting this plea, Mr. David Thomas said the seven defendants were all University or public-school men.—*Manchester Guardian*.

SCHOOLCHILDREN AS WRITERS

A LITTLE while ago Mr. Bertrand Russell quoted home-made poems by children attending the school he was running at Petersfield. Some correspondents were unkind enough to cast reflections on their originality and to suggest sources.

The modern child, like his parents, is somewhat standardised. It is very difficult to get writing and drawing from children, coming, as it were, from their own immediacy. Children nowadays find themselves in a cultural quagmire into which all the streams of an old culture like ours have trickled. And the mud sticks. The child of an eighteenth-century country labourer would be brought up under influences practically unchanged for centuries, and peculiar to his station in life. The basis of his culture would be uncorrupt speech and a first-hand acquaintance, both shrewd and superstitious, with natural phenomena. But perhaps some room was left him to possess his soul. His descendant of to-day starts with corrupt and impoverished speech, pavements instead of fields, street lamps instead of stars, and is compelled or coaxed to take tag-ends of polite literature, specialist science, history of his governors and the like, for his twentieth-century good. So nowadays it is usually the rebellious child who is anything at all like his Creator made him.

This article is written from the point of view of a hard-bitten worker in an elementary school. To such, Mr. Bertrand Russell is working in a hot-house. The elementary school is much more nearly a contemporary world in little. Perhaps nowhere more clearly may be seen those two emphatic symptoms of the sickness of society, the decay of speech and the decay in the sense of food. In an elementary school one daily feels the working of those forces determining the lives and so the personalities of the vast majority of people in this country to-day—unemployment, overcrowding, family and public-house rows, the cinema, the newspaper and popular sport, down to police activities and petty theft. We get "uplift" of all kinds, both from inside and out. I remember a visiting clergyman addressing a class of seven- and eight-year-old boys during a strike some years ago.

"And they wouldn't strike like this if they loved Jesus, would they?"

And a stalwart and very able teacher taking poetry with a class of twelve- and thirteen-year-old boys. He had read to them one of their favourites—Longfellow's *Slave's Dream*.

"Are there any slaves nowadays?" he asked.
"Yes, sir! Yes, sir!" chanted the whole class.
"Well, who are they?"
"People who work for not enough money, sir."

I was left in no doubt either of his political sympathies or his ability to teach.

Mr. Bertrand Russell is much concerned to discover what children are really like. That would be a task about equal to that of finding out what God Almighty is really like. And, indeed, even in an elementary school, one gets young children who seem to be still trailing clouds of glory behind them and who have all the beauty of unspoilt things. Perhaps a little of this shines through the following, by a girl of six, in spite of the harsh discipline of Letters.

IF I HAD SIXPENCE.

I would give twopence to buy my baby a bar of chocolate. And with twopence I would buy a ball and go to the park. And give a penny to a poor man. And spend the other penny.

By contrast, here is a little Iliad by a boy of eight.

THE FOX AND LION WAR.

General Ferdinand Fox of Foxland was going to war with Sir Lawrence Lion, the great conqueror of Lionany. With 100000000 men with arms General Ferdie went to Shark Shores where Sir Lawrence met them. Charge cried Ferdie at once millions and millions of foxes and lions dashed together. Ferdie struck Sir Lawrence with his sword Allah Ballah. Ferdie had won but 3000 of his men were killed in the battlefield. Later General Ferdinand Frederick Fox was crowned King of Lionany.

Like Homer, this boy is using material to hand, which is, in his case, recollection of animal stories. But we do get a glimpse into the fantastic imaginative world of the child of eight. I was told the other day of the noisy incredulity of a class of nine-year-old boys when they were informed that there were still a million people left in Chicago, so wild were their notions of the doings of the gangsters. In the exercise quoted, the fantasy is pinned down and used as material for disciplined thought. It is no small task for a boy of this age coming from a home where speech is corrupt to write such grammatical sentences.

The following exercise was by a nine-year-old rebel. This small chap seemed to live in a wilderness of women. There appeared to be any number of mothers, aunts and grandmothers bringing him up. With us, he was an awkward, stubborn little fellow. Occasionally, however, he escaped by way of his pen.

THE RABBITS AND THE DOG.

One dark night some rabbits were feasting merrily when one of them stood up and he said be quiet there is some danger around here, all got very excited. Not a moment had gone when soft footsteps were heard. Said Tiny to Tommy: I know who that is prowling round here, all of them listened eagerly. He is the farmer's bulldog, and if he gets hold of us he'll crunch us up greedily. All grew very quiet, you could have heard a pin drop. Suddenly one rabbit said there's a trap what Snowy was caught in. Snap, Snap went the trap. Grr—gr—gr— growled the dog, and he died and the rabbits went home safely.

The freshness of this contrasts with the mock child-language of newspaper Children's Columns.

Mr. Bertrand Russell seemed much impressed by the poems his children wrote. There is a good deal of poetry of that kind written in elementary schools. But probably the truly original poetry of children, like that of peasants, never gets beyond the phrase. I know a boy of three, who, when out for a little walk with his father on a boisterous moonlight night, was suddenly blown down flat, and, picking himself up, said: "John in the wind." A little later he pointed to the moon chased by clouds saying: "Moon in the wind."

For comparison with those quoted by Mr. Russell, the following is interesting. It was actually written by a boy of eleven in answer to a scholarship examination question.

A COUNTRY HOLIDAY.

Out in the country is one of the healthiest places you can have.
All the trees with blossom and the happy birds which are always singing on a summer's day.
Lie in the fields which are full with buttercups and clovers.
Down the lanes and come to a farmhouse which is full with animals.
The hayricks which give a nice smell that makes you feel as if you want to sleep in it.
Away from the traffic and in the peaceful country.
Who can ask for more?

The author is a merry, defiant lad by no means sufficiently a conformist to win a scholarship. He did not set out to write free-verse, but intended this to be his "Composition."

The street cry is an unsophisticated kind of poetry which children readily imitate. A translation of a Sixteenth Century Italian street cry, "Roast Chestnuts hot," sung by the English Singers, was studied as a model. London street cries were written in imitation.

LONDON OLD IRON.

Old iron, old iron, any old iron, rags, bottles and jars.
Any old iron or rags, bottles and jars.
Bottles and jars, any old iron or rags.
Dust on the iron and dust on the jars.
I'll only have iron, rags, bottles and jars.
Old iron, old iron, any old iron, rags, bottles and jars.
I'll buy iron for sixpence, rags for eightpence, jars for twopence and bottles for fourpence.
Any old iron, rags, bottles and jars.

Surely, "originality" in writing is the expression of uniqueness of idea, of mood, of vision. This comes out in the work of some children.

THE SPIDER AND THE FLY.

"Come into my parlour," said the spider to the fly.
"No thanks," replied the fly, "I'm not so silly as all that."
"Come into my parlour and have tea," said the spider, getting nearer every time.

"Go out of it, long-shanks," laughed the fly, going backwards.
"I don't want to eat you," quoth the spider.
"You want me for your tea," said the fly, slyly.
"You'd make me sick if I ate you," replied the spider.
"Would I, you old lump of jelly?" laughed the fly.
"Got you," shouted the spider, making a dash after him.
"No, you aint, you old monkey," said the fly, flying away. "Good-bye!"

The mischievousness of the boy of twelve is caught in words all unconsciously to the author, who thought he was doing a technical exercise in the use of inverted commas. He had, however, chosen his own subject, and, I think, certainly took pleasure in his task.

The following was an exercise in narrative. One method of approaching the writing of narrative with children is by way of the fable. Aesop's *Sick Lion*, which is told in the third person, was studied, and the class set to rewrite the fable from the point of view of the Fox. It was made plain to the boys that they were to make the story rather more descriptive than Aesop did.

AESOP'S "SICK LION" TOLD BY THE FOX.

"Hullo, Mr. Fox," said Mr. Wolf as he turned round to talk to me after a conversation with his brother.
"Do you know Mr. Lion is very ill?" asked Mr. Wolf.
"No," I said, "is he?"
"Yes, and he wants you to see him," exclaimed Mr. Wolf.
"All right," said I, "I will," muttering to myself, "I've got more sense in my head than Mr. Lion thinks."
Standing at the mouth of the cave, I asked him how he felt. He said he felt very ill and wanted cheering up. On seeing the crafty look on his face, I asked him politely to excuse me for not going in, as I had seen foot-prints going into the den, but none coming out.
"The greedy tike," I thought to myself. "Oh, mustn't his belly be full! Perhaps he has got the wolf, hare, squirrel, and all the animals in the wood, but he will never have the fox. I suppose all the animals took all that rubbish in he told them, and didn't see the trick. What, my Great, Great Aunt's son, that foolish one, had more sense than some of these animals."

Of course he was much indebted to Aesop. The character of the Fox suited this lad of eleven perfectly.

Another illustration of the intellectual quality of this lad is given in this conversation.

A DONKEY AND A CARROT.

"Hallo, Daddy Donkey," said the Carrot, "how are you gee-ing on?"
"Eee-au, Eee-au, Eee-au, Ee-au," said the Donkey.
"I suppose that means, very well thank-you?" said the Carrot.
"No," said the Donkey, "it means in your language, mind your own business, else I'll eat you. That's what it means. Got it?"
"Yes," said the Carrot, "I've got it."
"Well, hold it tight," said the Donkey.
"But do tell me how——"
"You're in for it now," said the Donkey.
"No have mercy, have mercy upon me," said the Carrot. "You see, you are so peculiar you know, the most peculiar animal I have ever seen."
"I don't see anything peculiar about me," said the Donkey.
"There is," said the Carrot, "you make that awful noise, worse than a cat's chorus. And then you eat us poor little shrimps, like an elephant to a mouse."
"Hallo," said the Donkey, "the dinner bell is ringing. I must eat you now. Good-bye!"
"Good-bye!" squeaked the Carrot.

He shows no little subtlety in presenting the point of view of the carrot. The situation is typical of the strong lording it over the weak in the daily lives of boys.

Of course, some children never "come over." The art of Letters is not for them. But the technicalities of the exercises quoted may be taught. Children are like animals: you can teach them to do almost anything if you are skilful enough. And the immense advantage of teaching in an elementary school under an easy-going headmaster, not overmuch afraid of authorities, is that you have practically a free hand. But in order to get an immediate expression of the child mind you must be sufficiently skilful in cutting out the expression of somebody else's. As with adults, children find it much easier to be like somebody else than to be like themselves.

J. H. H.

BEHAVIOUR

AN eminent woman doctor has been disturbing the peace of two families by telling on excellent authority the story of an experiment made by Huxley and Darwin on Huxley's baby. Huxley, it was said, held the infant in his arms while Darwin pricked it with a pin and then made notes on its reactions to pin-pricking. It is never safe to believe stories told on good authority. At least half of them are untrue. Either there has been a mishearing somewhere, or a misunderstanding, or a misremembering: there are scores of ways in which a story gets distorted with no dishonesty in the process. Sometimes it ceases even to be about the person of whom it was originally told. And, in any case, every hearer who repeats it translates it afresh. Hence it is always best to test the good authority of a story by its credibility. As regards Darwin and Huxley, I should say that particular story should have been dismissed as incredible. It would have made a perject subject for a Max Beerbohm caricature of the simple enthusiasm of men of science. To believe it is like mistaking a Max Beerbohm caricature for an exact historical record.

If it were told about some modern men of science, it would be easier to believe it. We have marched since the Victorian era, and the sacred rights of experiment are more generally recognised. Children may be more indulgently treated in some respects; but men of science are on their trail and it would never be surprising to catch an ardent experimenter sticking a pin into one of them to see what it would do, when he thought no one was looking. We read, for instance, concerning two American experimenters, that "reactions of various kinds—to noise, deprivation of food, pricking with a needle, restraint, dropping, and others—were induced in infants." The Victorian father would never have thought of that sort of thing. He was desperately anxious not to drop his baby: there are moderns, however, whose devotion to science is apparently at least equal to their devotion to their babies and who will drop the baby simply in order to see what happens. Similarly, it was the old-fashioned way, when an infant was hungry, to feed it: to-day, there are enthusiasts who will deliberately let it go hungry in order to study its muscular and emotional reactions to hunger. As for pricking the baby with a needle, the Victorian knew—or thought that he knew—exactly how the baby would react to the experiment and did not need to make the experiment in order to prove it. The modern experimenter, however, is a doubting Thomas who can scarcely believe that it hurts a child to be pricked with a needle till he has heard it cry out.

Another American investigator, writing recently on "how the behaviourist works," has described what we must do in order to know about the behaviour of a child. "In order to get a picture of his emotional behaviour," he tells us, "we have to test separation from his mother. . . . We must rob him of his toys, of things he is playing with. We must let a bigger boy or girl bully him, we must put him in high places, on ledges (making injury impossible, however), on the backs of ponies or dogs." From the point of view of science for science sake I do not quite like the look of that clause "making injury impossible, however." After all, it would be interesting to know whether, if the child fell off the ledge down a twenty-feet precipice, it would break its neck. Science, I believe, cannot yet tell us the exact distance which a baby has to fall in order to break its neck. Would it not be well to have the thing proved once and for all? Even as regards the experiment of robbing the child of its toys, why not go a little further and jump on the toys till they are smashed to bits, the investigator meanwhile making maniacal faces at the child to discover whether its prevailing emotion is fury, self-pity, or helpless terror? Much might be learnt, too, by gradually allowing the bullying to increase from simple teasing to nipping and pinching and so on to hair-pulling: it would be interesting to know whether the small boy who had his hair pulled by a bigger boy

responded by screaming or by kicking his persecutor hard on the shins. After enumerating these methods of studying the behaviour of children, the psychologist remarks: "I am giving you a picture of how we work just to convince you of the simplicity, naturalness and accuracy of our methods." I must confess, however, that, natural as it is to rob a child of its toys, allow him to be bullied, and put him on ledges, it seems to me that we shall be putting artificial restraints on nature if we make injury impossible. Nature has always been partial to injury.

Some of these psychological experiments on infants, indeed, suggest that the psychologist is more of a playmate than an inhuman devotee of science. Thus, the writer from whom I have quoted tells us how he early discovered that "loud sounds almost invariably produce a marked reaction in infants from the very moment of birth," and how he went on proving it in the most playful manner. First, he made the new-born baby jump by striking a steel bar with a hammer. Then, he found that some low sounds as well as loud ones called out "fear responses." "In the half-sleeping infant of two or three days of age," he declares, "I have called them out repeatedly by suddenly crinkling a half of a newspaper near its ear, and by making a loud, shrill, hissing sound with the lips." How much pleasanter this must be for the baby than to have to listen to the cracked voice of a nurse singing "Ye Banks and Braes" or "Old Dog Tray"! Trailing clouds of glory, the infant is at once plunged into the rival glories of Hampstead Heath on a Bank Holiday—into all the lovely cacophony of squeaking balloons, tin trumpets, buzzers, and steam engines. At a later stage of childhood, the fun will become still more fast and furious. He may be as lucky, for example, as little Peter, aged three, whose fear responses were called out by a white rat. "Peter was put in a crib in a playroom and immediately became absorbed in his toys. A white rat was introduced into the crib from behind. (The experimenter was behind a screen.) At sight of the rat, Peter screamed and fell flat on his back in a paroxysm of fear." There is no space to go into the steps by which, after many tribulations, Peter's "reaction to white rats was greatly improved." Soon he was able to handle a mouse and a tangled mass of earthworms like a little man. By this time, no doubt, he is a great lover of animals, and a prominent member of Our Dumb Friends' League.

I could not help thinking, when I read of these experiments, how much the science of grown-up investigators resembles the teasing practices of the young. The child is a born experimenter. He will experiment with himself as well as with others. Most of us in our childhood have passed our forefinger through a gas-flame or a candle-flame. We wanted, I suppose, partly to see whether we could do this without hurting ourselves and partly to test our courage. As for experiments on others, what but an experimenter is the small boy who takes a mouse to school in a match-box and lets it loose in the class-room? How keenly he studies the fear responses of the schoolmistress and the screaming schoolgirls!

Another boy whom I knew used to leave nails upside down on the road in the early days of pneumatic tyres. At the age of ten he knew more about the emotional responses of cyclists than you or I could learn in a lifetime. Then there was a youth who, when smoking a forbidden cigarette, used to invite you to put your finger on his lowest waistcoat button if you wanted to see the smoke coming out of his eyes: as soon as the innocent victim was looking for the smoke, with his hand in the right position, the youth would quickly bring the burning cigarette down on the back of the trusting hand. By this means he learned that burning was a cause of pain.

Was not Mr. Churchill also an experimenter when, on his first day at Harrow, he went up behind the diminutive Mr. Amery and pushed him into a deep pond? He simply wanted to see what would happen. He would have known what would happen if he had realised that Mr. Amery was his senior and as muscular as he was quick-tempered. When he did to his horror realise this, he did not pause to study Mr. Amery's emotional responses, but ran for his life. Even so, however, he did learn one valuable lesson as a result of his experiment—that it is not safe to judge by appearances.

And so we might go on through the long list of booby-traps—bricks put under hats for foolish men to kick, and so forth—and see in them all the enthusiastic experiments of young amateur psychologists. I am convinced that half the so-called cruelties of children are the result, not of sadism, but of psychological curiosity. We do our best, however, to limit the activities of psychological curiosity in the young. We draw the line at their deliberately sticking pins into babies. I am not sure that pins, and white rats, and such things, ought not to have restrictions imposed on their use among psychologists as well as among schoolboys. In a really civilised country any psychologist seen lurking near a cradle with a pin would at once be disarmed and handed over to the police. Y. Y.

TO THE MONSTER OF LOCH NESS

THAT HE WOULD REMAIN INVISIBLE

(Photographs of the Monster's wash were published in the TIMES *of August 9th, and the camera search was still being continued.)*

THAT process-reproduction
May place beyond a guess
Your habits and construction,
Has filled me with distress
O Monster of Loch Ness.

Your dubious existence,
Your legendary fame
Account for the persistence
Of your mysterious name
As journalistic game.

Too soon would be expended
Your powers to attract
If you, as news, descended
To scientific fact,
With measurements exact.

Think, too, how many wonders,
Debated with delight,
Have stood revealed as blunders
When fate, or folly's spite,
Has dragged them into sight.

Reds, Nazis, or Fascisti—
The golden dreams they stress,
While still remote and misty
May suitably impress:
So you, too, in Loch Ness.

MACFLECKNOE

Correspondence

THE ISSUE OF FREEDOM

SIR,—Surely the first step to clarity of thought on this question is to recognise that "freedom" is a relative term. We are free to do this, or not free to do that, as the case may be. The letters of your "liberal" correspondents all seem to proceed on the assumption that "freedom" in the abstract is a worthy—indeed the only worthy—object of political devotion. On closer examination, this abstract "freedom" turns out to be an alias for one particular freedom (viz., liberty to express and propagate opinions) beside which other common or garden freedoms valued by the man in the street are, it seems, of little importance. A very natural doctrine for intellectuals, whose stock in trade is opinion and nothing else; but a fallacy all the same. The freedoms

most important to the plain man and woman comprise, first, the freedom to enjoy a sufficiency of good food and drink, secondly, a sufficiency of house-room; thirdly, a sufficiency of clothes, boots and other elementary comforts of life—freedoms which owing to economic conditions are denied to the majority of people. Fourthly, they want freedom to live undisturbed by that form of mass-murder which we call war. Fifthly, freedom to acquire enough knowledge of the world about them to make them fit for citizenship in a civilised society—a freedom conspicuously denied to them by our class system of education.

Marxists contend that in the absence of these indispensable conditions of a tolerable society, the "freedom of expression" supposed to be guaranteed in bourgeois society is of altogether secondary importance. At its best, it is a useful tool in the hands of competent agitators against the society which denies those other and more vital freedoms. At its worst, it amounts to the liberty of the press-lord and the careerist politician to "dope" the uneducated with lies. The Marxist is prepared to defend this freedom so long as it is useful, and no longer: in short, he is a realist.

ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

13 Laurel Road, Wimbledon, S.W.20.

SIR,—I am afraid Mr. Pitcairn is right. It is an appalling prospect, but I shall have to read more Marxist writings. The difficulty is to know which Marxist writings are genuinely Marxist.

Pending the discovery, I am grateful to Mr. Pitcairn for a first lesson in genuine Marxism. I had supposed that since he appealed to Lenin, he shared Lenin's contempt for "bourgeois" liberties. But it seems not. Mr. Pitcairn does attach real value to our existing liberties. But I judge that he values them only or primarily as weapons in the hands of the class-conscious proletariat for use in the revolutionary struggle. If this is the true Marxist position, my main criticism stands. If you value our present liberties only or primarily as weapons in the class-war, you have no moral or rational ground of complaint against your enemies if they seek to deprive you of those weapons. You naturally resent the loss, but you cannot legitimately criticise your enemy's action.

We who regard reactionaries as fellow-citizens can protest against their attacks on our liberties or make direct appeals to them on the basis of common interests and principles. Marxists who regard reactionaries as class-enemies, and who are engaged in illegal revolutionary work, cannot honestly join in either protest or appeal. Again, if the Marxist correctly diagnoses the nature and habits of the bourgeois State, he cannot reasonably expect such a State to extend liberties to its professed enemies. If he values the liberties he possesses under the British constitution, he has no right to describe Great Britain as a bourgeois State, and he ought not to be engaged in undermining a State whose advantages he claims and abuses.

The Marxist cannot have it both ways. If he is engaged in a revolutionary class-war, he may claim that all is fair in war and disregard both truth and humanity as the Bolsheviks have done and still do in Russia. But he cannot, without hypocrisy, wax indignant at his class-enemies for their similar sins. War justifies their excesses as it justifies his. The only moral and rational defence of our liberties involves the renunciation of the spirit and methods of war. This renunciation the Marxist is not prepared to make. His conscience may be clear, but his head is not.

Bryn Telor, Sarnau, Cards. H. G. WOOD

SIR,—Mr. Ellis Roberts's incursion into the discussion on the relations between Marxism and liberty reveals a faith in the "atmosphere of freedom" in this country which is so childlike that one hesitates to take him seriously. Nevertheless, even a child, if he is in error, should be corrected, and it is necessary to remind Mr. Roberts that we can say, read, and write what we please only so long as our speech, our readings, and our writings do not seriously challenge the established capitalist order.

The range of liberty which this implies is much narrower than liberal apologists for capitalism admit. Next Saturday Mr. S. Elias, of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement, will leave prison on completion of a two years' sentence for writing a letter recommending "His Majesty's subjects" to strike. During the general strike of 1926, hundreds of supporters of the working class were punished for saying or writing things antagonistic to the employing class, and this sort of thing continues to be an almost daily occurrence. To-day the holding of meetings over a large area of the country under military control is prohibited, lest words should be uttered which might reveal to soldiers their function as supporters of a class society. Mr. William Ferrie found himself free to say what he pleased—in the privacy of his own home, but not on the wireless.

One could extend this list of examples, but enough has been said to show how general is the type of restriction on liberty which shackles the activities of opponents of capitalism, though it is hardly irksome to middle-class littérateurs. Such restrictions Marxists desire to remove, for, as Mr. Pitcairn says, they favour freedom more wholeheartedly than the friends of the bourgeois State. But in order to do this they believe that the abolition of class society is first necessary. They are practical men and they realise that in this somewhat complex and violent process temporary restrictions may have to be enforced against those who seek to reimpose the shackles of a capitalist minority on a proletarian majority.

ARTHUR WILLIAMS

SIR,—May I as a worker who is interested in your correspondence on Freedom ask Mr. Ellis Roberts what he means when he says: "We can say, read, and write what we please"? I am quite sure he is not referring to my class. No doubt this "Democracy" which allows him to express himself pretty freely is an improvement on the previous forms of society, but for the workers it is very far from being a system of freedom. It allows me and my class, once every few years, to put a cross (itself a sign of illiteracy) on a voting paper to decide which member of the privileged class shall govern us. And it is our unfortunate experience that the Labour Party, once our hope, has rewarded us no better for our confidence.

We have the freedom to sell our labour in a very one-sided contract to any employer who will take us in, but for the millions unemployed even that "privilege" has been taken way, and they are now being forced by the Unemployment Act to go into labour camps whether they like it or not. What does freedom mean to an unemployed man who is getting 15*s.* 3*d.* a week?

If Mr. Ellis Roberts will try to look at this problem from our point of view—that of the vast majority—he will see that modern "Democracy" for the privileged classes who can afford to pay for it means the freedom to indulge themselves, but for the working class it means precious little. We are becoming more and more conscious that newspapers, the wireless, films, and the other means for expression of opinion are directly or indirectly controlled by the State Power for the propagation of a clearly defined set of ideas—to keep us cheerful, docile, "British," willing, in fact, anything but conscious of our own servility.

May I in conclusion tell Mr. Ellis Roberts that we see very little of the "tolerance" he so much admires. If he were in an unemployed demonstration when it is being baton-charged by fifty mounted police, he might think differently. Perhaps I need only remind him of the tear gas which is being used against our fellow strikers in America and of the shooting of unarmed farmers in Ireland only this week.

W. PEARSE

8 Paragon Buildings, S.E.1.

TOWARDS A CLASSLESS EDUCATION

SIR,—Your article "Towards a Classless Education" stimulates thought on several tempting lines. It is satisfactory to find that at last an organ of progressive opinion is prepared to consider the question of control in education and, indeed, in administration generally—an issue to which the Labour Party seems hitherto to have been completely blind.

Few, except those who come into close contact with the administrative machine, appear to realise how deliberately and how effectively control is kept in the hands of those who have been educated at the two older universities or how exclusive in their sympathies and narrow in their experience are the administrators thus trained. A democracy cannot afford to be so served, and the Labour Party deludes itself if it thinks that its main task will be accomplished when it has secured a Parliamentary majority; its work will then begin, and one of its most important jobs will be to ensure that control and direction in all public services is spread among persons of the widest diversity of training and experience.

Not long ago Mr. Leonard had the enterprise to ask how the Upper Division of the Civil Service is recruited. The figures of successes in the annual open competition for entry to that very close corporation are remarkable. In the three years 1931–33, 66 successful candidates were divided as follows: Cambridge, 30; Oxford, 28; Edinburgh and Aberdeen, 2 each; Glasgow, London,

Manchester and St. Andrews, 1 each. This result is less surprising when it is known that candidates from the newer universities are deliberately attracted at a somewhat earlier age to a competition for an inferior group of appointments such as inspectorships of taxes. Passage from this group to the higher group is so rare as to be almost negligible, and only those who have seen at close quarters the exclusiveness of the Oxford and Cambridge set can realise how much democracy is losing by allowing the control of the Civil Service to remain in the hands of a small but extraordinarily powerful set of people who believe that the Civil Service consists only of the few hundred who constitute their own group. So does the *Times*, in a leader on End of Term, think only of boys and girls leaving the big public boarding schools—the rest can be ignored.

My own contacts are, however, mainly with educational administration, local and central. I find that in local education there is a steadily increasing tendency to believe that young Mr. A, from Eton and Trinity, who has never set foot in an elementary school and is totally ignorant of the manner of life of the mass of the elementary school population, will make a successful educational administrator with no more original experience than can be obtained in a short spell of public school teaching or university lecturing after leaving the university—so long as the university is Oxford or Cambridge and not one of the upstarts in such unpleasant and unscholarly places as London or Manchester.

But, again, the tendency in local administration is less surprising when one knows how the Board of Education is staffed. I suggest that Mr. Leonard should pursue his researches. He should ask at what universities the members of the administrative staff of the Board of Education were educated; he should ask the same question as regards the inspectorate, and, excluding the assistant inspectors, he should ask how many inspectors have had any teaching experience in elementary schools as part of their general equipment. No one, I think, would be foolish enough now to suggest that the best training for inspection would be many years of service in the lowest range of school, but it seems at least as foolish to think that complete ignorance of that type of school and its population is a qualification. I find that one result of the present method of handing over control in the Board of Education almost wholly to the Oxford and Cambridge group is a widespread belief that a good many inspectors are appointed to amuse teachers—and this, I fear, applies even more to the women than to the men. Surely in the Board of Education of all places variety of recruitment, in administration and in inspection, is of vital importance. I cannot think that the point needs to be laboured, but I am sure you are right in thinking that the possessing classes will fight for their citadel to the last.

I am disposed to think that a Labour Government with real power will have to make these exclusive forms of education a definite disqualification for the service of the State.

MIDDLE CLASS

"PRISONS"

SIR,—In his article last week Mr. Harry Roberts falls into an error which is common among penal reformers—the assumption that "the rightly condemned 'separate system' has quite disappeared from our prisons." Unfortunately, such a sweeping assertion is incorrect because it still persists in the treatment of remand prisoners, the "Cinderella" of our prison system.

An accused who is refused bail, or who is unable to find the bail offered to him by the court, is denied the benefits of associated labour or the relief of concert parties, debates, lectures and such other amenities of prison life. He is permitted one hour's exercise in silence if the weather be fine, and is allowed one-quarter hour's visit daily from two friends simultaneously between 10 and 12 and 2 and 4, Sundays excepted. These restricted hours and the centralisation of remand prisons, with its consequent expense in travel, make frequent visits difficult.

If the day be wet, therefore, or if no friends are able to pay a visit, the accused spends 24 hours out of every 24 in absolute solitary confinement, broken only by the arrival of his three meals, a visit to chapel possibly, and visits to the lavatory—utensils are provided in the cells in place of urinals. Papers, books and magazines may be obtained, if the accused can afford to pay for them—and if they pass the Governor's censorship—as a supplement to the meagre prison library allowance, but they must be left behind in the prison at the end of the remand period. Incidentally, the time-honoured practice still persists of permanently confiscating on entry any cigarettes, tobacco, matches or clay pipes found on remand as well as on convicted prisoners, even if the remand be but for a few days. There are other matters which are in need of drastic reform.

The treatment of remand prisoners has not varied since the beginning of this century, except for a limited amount of smoking at exercise (when it is fine); two serious considerations arise which are not always fully appreciated. Firstly, after undergoing treatment which is in effect worse than prison, possibly for a month or more, an innocent and acquitted person is not entitled to any compensation whatever. Secondly, if the accused is ultimately convicted and sentenced to prison, this preliminary period is not counted in the serving of that sentence; in many countries a more enlightened procedure exists and the period of remand is reckoned in reduction of a subsequent sentence. Here, apparently, we treat a remand prisoner as if he were guilty, but had not yet complied with the formalities of a conviction, and for that omission we give him an extra heavy dose of solitary confinement.

HUGH FRANKLIN

3 Cornwood Close, N.2.

THE EXPORT OF FAITH

SIR,—Doubtless it is difficult these days to be consistently true to one's principles, especially such principles as those championed by your periodical, but nevertheless it is a matter of some surprise and disappointment that your interesting paper, which professes to be such a staunch upholder of justice and freedom, should on occasions be so arrogant and intolerant. Your regular contributor, "Critic," is pleased to admit, what is indeed obvious, that Christians, like Communists, have convictions and a creed. But he himself, it seems, has little use for convictions (except the conviction that to hold a definite creed is an indication of childishness), and blandly assumes that only a "philosophy based on the use of reason and the desire for human happiness"—that is, the philosophy which appeals to him—is a fit philosophy for intelligent people. He uses the word "pathetic" to describe the "devotion of European missionaries who give up their lives to spreading among savages 'truths' which their own more civilised (!) compatriots have for the most part rejected." What appears unutterably pathetic to one at least of your readers is the fond belief of people such as your contributor that a vague "humane agnosticism" is going to save the world. "Critic" is fully aware that "rationalism" commands the assent, and is likely to command the assent, of only a small minority of scientifically minded people, and he recognises that it is going to be of no use for the civilising of backward races; but the probability that there is therefore something deficient in rationalism, and the possibility that a faith such as Christianity or Communism is what the world needs, do not seem to have entered his head.

Lichfield. P. E. GOLDIE

VOLUNTARY HOSPITALS

SIR,—"Critic's" criticisms of the Voluntary Hospital System are neither justified nor deserved. As one connected for some years past with the administration of one of our smaller London hospitals, I venture to suggest that his statements seem to indicate that he has little practical experience of the system he condemns. I know of no competition between hospitals and doctors to which he refers, and certainly as far as the London hospitals are concerned, the close supervision given by the King Edward's Hospital Fund is a guarantee that there is no undue waste. I have never found that patients have any difficulty in making their complaints, if any such there be, and the Board of most hospitals are only too anxious to investigate anything of the kind.

I do not understand the vague statements made by your correspondent of what he describes as the "grotesque regulation of the private lives of the nurses." Perhaps he will give some details. It is obvious that in hospitals, as in all other large institutions employing female staff, there must be some restrictions and regulations, particularly when the staff "live in," but I have never heard of any serious complaint. In fact, in my experience, the nursing staff in our voluntary hospitals are treated with the utmost consideration.

The complaint that there is any blind opposition to women doctors is answered by the fact of the many women doctors on the staff of numbers of hospitals in the country.

I am not aware that most promising young doctors prefer to go to L.C.C. hospitals, and as far as this hospital is concerned, whenever there is an appointment vacant, we have no difficulty

in getting applications from most brilliant and capable young doctors—the difficulty being, in view of the high standard of their attainments, to make a suitable choice.

In conclusion, it is obvious that your correspondent is one of those persons who are so obsessed with the idea of a State and Municipal Medical Service that he is unable to appreciate the great advantages and public benefit derived from our great Voluntary System which has stood the test of so many years' experience.

I wonder if he has ever considered what would be the financial burden on the taxpayer of the extension of the Government-controlled Hospital System which he seems to favour.

National Temperance Hospital, Hampstead Road, N.W.1 — HERBERT S. SYRETT, Vice-Chairman.

P.S.—In one thing I agree with your correspondent. It would be a public calamity if the L.C.C. either take over St. George's or rebuild it. Does "Critic" know the cost involved?

["Critic" is prepared to bring forward evidence for his statements, but that needs an article, which we hope to publish in the near future.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

WALKERS AND ROAD ACCIDENTS

SIR,—In an editorial note on the toll of the road, you say, "Statistics show that 80 per cent. of road accidents occur through the fault of pedestrians." May I point out that the Report on Fatal Road Accidents which occurred during the year 1933, issued by the Ministry of Transport, states that out of 6,942 accidents involving the death of 7,134 persons, in only 2,815 cases was the sole or main cause attributed to pedestrians?

May I further remind you that these figures are probably weighted against the pedestrian because, as the Report states, "The opinion recorded by the police must necessarily follow such evidence as they have, and it is often limited to the uncorroborated statement of the driver concerned. In nearly 68 per cent. of the total cases analysed, the pedestrian or pedal cyclist is dead or fatally injured, and therefore unable to give his version"? Some 80 per cent. of the pedestrian victims are children or elderly persons. Among pedestrians, there were more octogenarians killed in 1933 than those between the ages of 20 and 35.

The Pedestrians' Association, 3 Tudor Street, E.C.4. — T. C. FOLEY, Secretary

[We apologise for an obvious slip. Our point was that since so large a percentage of pedestrians are involved in road accidents the Minister of Transport ought to "go hiking" in order to see the situation from the pedestrians' point of view.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

Miscellany

TWO HOURS IN AN ITALIAN UNIVERSITY

IT is the "academic quarter of an hour," quaintly so-called as being a respite from academic exercises; in fact the interval between lectures. The students stand talking in groups in the wide, shady cloisters of the court. They don't look much like undergraduates—to an English eye. Much more like country cousins up to town for a week-end in their Sunday best. But then, you always look dressy rather than comfortable in Italian tailorings—your waist is apt to curve inwards, your shoulders to approach your ears. Besides your Italian, of both sexes, spends far more time and thought on appearance than we in England. How else to explain the innumerable barbers' shops? There are a few female students, usually to be found in pairs surrounded by numerous males, as one might expect in a country where Roman Catholicism is something more than an official religion. It is vain to look for the easy-going sweater and the flannel bags, to say nothing of that spectacled ferocity which indicates first string of the Women's Debating Society.

"Ah, ecco Vafetti!" We all turn round, aware that elaborate joking is now about to begin. "And the philosophic mind what does it ponder now?" Roars of mirth follow this witticism. Someone puts his hand on my shoulder and, shaking his head, resignedly pronounces to me and all the world, "Uomo fiero Vafetti—he's a stern fellow."

Vafetti never knows how to answer back, but walks up with a childlike smile, well aware that he is the favourite as well as the butt. He is a handsome little man from Naples and is going to be a philosopher. Allude to that or his Neapolitan accent and you won't fail to raise a laugh, loud in proportion to the obviousness of your allusion. Subtleties of humour tend to evaporate in Italy. The older the joke the better. Vafetti is our perennial source of laughter, in season and out—it must be admitted that Naples as everyone knows, has a personality of its own which stands apart from the rest of Italy. Particularly so to-day when the philosopher Croce and his group make it their headquarters from which to issue the one Italian periodical that criticises Fascism and has not been suppressed. It is noticeable that Vafetti's button-hole fails to display the ubiquitous badge of the Partito Nazionale Fascista.

"Gude fell-or," he says—it is his only English phrase, and he likes to put me at my ease with it and show how pleased he is with me; and linking his arm in mine, he chaperones me into the neighbouring lecture room. It is impossible not to be charmed with the way in which my fellow students take me everywhere with an air of giving me a personal introduction to everything, and at the same time keeping an eye on things to see that they offer me a properly hospitable welcome. We hang our outer garments on the row of pegs at the back of the lecture room, being careful to take two pegs each, so that by stretching our overcoats over the two, we may not injure their beautifully square shoulders and uncreased backs. Then we sit down around the lecturer's table, for we are entirely innocent of that absurd English diffidence which fills up the back rows of every lecture hall and leaves the front ones empty. Here the moral relationship of lecturer and audience is reversed—we feel no obligation towards him whatsoever and, however persuasive he may be, if we don't like him we shall have no scruple in taking out a book and reading under his very nose.

The room in which we find ourselves reminds me irresistibly of an English police court. We sit on wooden benches behind wooden desks, each row a little raised above the one in front. The judge has a high and magnificent pulpit, complete with canopy and steps up, while the clerk sits literally at his feet behind a table fronting us. Barred windows, walls distempered in severe greens and whites.

Our lecturer arrives some eight minutes late—time is not money in Italy. We stand up like schoolboys, while he raises his right arm in the official salute, disrobes, and takes his place behind the clerk's table. Then, as if noticing for the first time that we are still standing, he waves us into our seats again. Leaning impressively forward, elbows on table, hands commanding our attention, he begins to speak without notes, not like a lecturer, but like a passionate advocate. And so he is—the plausible apostle of a theory whose application to fact he does not invite us to consider or to criticise, but perhaps mentions with an apologetic shrug once or twice. Justly so, since he is addressing an audience long since converted! But he does not relax his efforts for all that, now emitting a torrent of words amid marvels of gesticulation performed by his hands, now pointing a dramatic finger with voice dropped to a whisper, there to be completely drowned by the screams of the children and the hooting of the traffic outside in the street. For the first quarter of an hour the students listen enwrapt, often smiling at a subtle point or nodding their heads in agreement. After that their attention begins to wander, they take out diaries, yawn, feel their hair, perhaps open a book. The lecturer brings his final cadence to a close five minutes early. He will be out of town on Thursday, so that we shan't hear him again till next week. No matter, his lectures will be printed for us at the end of the term. Why we bother to go and listen to him at all, I'm sure I don't know, unless it be out of sheer good nature.

Now it is time to wander back to the Collegio where we have our meals in common, the dozen or so free scholars.

Our lecturer walks with us arguing, explaining, denying, and pleading to the students who surround him, all talking at once. He is not in the least donnish, but will sit in our midst at table, and the subject of his lecture, having been vigorously attacked all the way down the street, will finally be demolished during the meal—unless, of course, it is carried over till our next meeting. At table we rarely talk anything but political shop—the Corporative State and all that.

We flock into the dining-room behind the Professore—he must always be the first to sit down. A napkin and a flask of cheap red wine on the one side, a huge piece of bread on the other, define each one's share of the table-cloth. A plateful of macaroni reclines in between. The room is small and brilliantly lit, and with a clatter that fits the general brightness of the scene, we lose no time in getting smartly off the mark with our food. Some take out a newspaper or read the letter that is waiting for them by their plate. For the rest, the conversation tends to pivot round the Professore, drawing the whole gathering into a single conversational unit. Geographically, it is not ideally constituted for that function, the most distant members being some twenty feet apart. But what does that matter to the beautiful open vowels and resonant throats of Italians? The hubbub rises and falls in great waves, everyone joining in to swell them to breaking-point since, individualism being eschewed in the Corporative State, a conversation consists not of one after another offering an opinion, but of everyone simultaneously adding his contribution to the whole, each having in the process to raise his voice a little more in order to be heard. At such a moment half the room is on its feet waving its arms, while the Professore hurls a dramatic gesture with the chicken-bone he has just been chewing. Next minute—a tense silence penetrated only by the vibrating significance of our eloquent eyebrows and shoulders. All a little confusing at first, it must be confessed, to one who has been reared in the great old halls of English academic societies where one dines off oak in dim tranquillity, far removed from the denizens of High Table, and where pewter pots are the only things that glitter.

Someone is absent this evening and his neighbours divide the spare food among themselves, while the less lucky ones further off cry out in vain. If there is anything on your plate you don't want, your friend next door will always take it and be grateful. Vafetti looks on quietly; then, finishing his course before everyone else, leaves his seat and grabs the extra plate for the next course from where it stands with the rest on the side table ready for serving. Paolo, who waits on us, is tickled to death. But the students who see their legitimate prize seized from under their noses, rush in wrath upon the thief, trying to tear the food out of his hands. Too late, because Vafetti stuffs it all into his mouth with both hands, while keeping off his assailants with kicks. We pat him on the back and offer him a drink to prevent his choking. The excitement gradually subsides, everyone sits down again, and the meal goes on normally.

But Vafetti is in a wicked mood to-night. When the last course of dried fruits comes round, he snatches a muscatel off the next man's plate, remarking blandly, "The Corporative spirit, comrade. No more private property." The next man retaliates. Vafetti seizes a table-knife and jabs it at his hand. Then the man on the other side joins in, and Vafetti has to cover the fruit with his left hand to save it. The man opposite makes a grab, someone comes up from behind, Vafetti is surrounded. He leaps up on to his chair with a half-stifled yell, chewing and swallowing at top speed, flourishing his knife round the plate which he holds aloft in his left hand. Someone hits him with a pellet of bread, then somebody else. He jumps down and hurls a handful of loaf in reply, guarding his food with the knife. A general fusillade ensues—it doesn't matter whom you throw at. One seizes a chair and, protecting one's head with it, makes a run for the door. Soon we are all outside in the hall, bursting our sides with laughter.

Now it is time to link arms and march through the town shouting tunes from Mascagni. "Are you going to join the ladies with us?" Vafetti asks me. "What ladies?" I inquire, forgetting I am in Italy. I have made an unsuspecting joke which is greeted with uproarious mirth, and "Bravo Inglese!" At last I understand. I take my leave of them and return to my room to work.

THE CENSOR AGAIN

THERE are many "Questions" which smoulder away in the social soil of our English life, flare up, die down, and then flare up again. The Stage Censorship, like Easier Divorce and Brighter Cricket, belongs to this category. In logic the Censorship is indefensible; in practice it is popular, at least with the people who own and control theatres; the general play-going public does not care a button either way. Authors of advanced opinions, who are compelled to pay a two-guinea fee for a licence and may be robbed of their work's reward by an individual's veto against which there is no appeal, are naturally "anti-Censor," and a handful of playgoers, who hold libertarian or Left Wing views, support them. But how small that number is can easily be discovered by an effort to found a private society for the performance of banned plays on a subscription basis. You may collect enough supporters to muster a Sunday Night audience; but any larger scheme is at once defeated by general apathy. Witness the Kingsway Theatre experiment of 1932.

When the critics are dragged out on Sunday evening to witness the private showing of some piece whose public performance has been forbidden, they often retort that the Censor has once more earned the general gratitude by protecting ordinary playgoers from a night of dreadful boredom. Sometimes this hard-worked jest is justified; many of the banned plays mentioned by Miss Dorothy Knowles in *The Censor, the Drama, and the Film* (Allen and Unwin, 7*s.* 6*d.*) have proved, in my own experience, childish and tedious, products of what Lenin wittily called "Infantile Diseases of the Left Wing." But that does not disprove the general fatuity of the censorship; some of the recently forbidden plays have deserved no such fate. Yet the Lord Chamberlain has an intelligent staff of readers, certainly more sensible and sensitive than those who were controlling our theatre at the time of the 1909 Inquiry. They intend well, but their task and their position defeats them. Give a master a cane and he will look round for somebody to whack. Hand a man a veto and temptation to show his authority may soon overwhelm his judgment. It is ridiculous to submit the scope and progress of an art to any such tribunal, especially to one working in the atmosphere of a Royal Palace and attached to the Royal Household. The absurdity, admittedly, is not so gross as it was, and many old bans have been removed. There is considerable liberty now in dramatic statement about sex; but the Censorship still prevents serious discussion of that which is a joke in every music-hall. Scarce a comedian nowadays but will raise a laugh with the word "Pansy" and the appropriate antics and intonations. But to regard perversion as a matter for social treatment instead of for senseless tittering is to be immediately silenced.

"The English Theatre," said Mr. Shaw long ago, "is always forty years behind the times." The Censorship helps to keep it so. Its opposition to any political portraiture or presentation of living people is absolute, and the freedom enjoyed by a leader-writer or cartoonist is rigorously denied to the dramatist. Aristophanes, being a classic, is sanctioned for school-boy reading. But no Aristophanes could earn a living or even a pittance on our stage. Plays may hover timidly round the edge of religious topics, but direct approach to the root of the matter is denied. The Censorship exists to enforce the taboos of the ordinary playgoer, that is, of middle-class opinion, since the English theatre is, on the whole, a middle-class institution. (It even tried to protect the Public Schools by banning the mild spectacle of *Young Woodley's* calf-love). The middle-class practise birth-control, but they

do not mention it at tea-parties any more than they debate the doctrine of the Trinity; the Censorship, though it is now fairly tolerant of the humour known as "blue," applies the tea-table standard when drama pays serious attention to subjects on the taboo-list.

But it goes on and is likely to go on going on. Its permit gives security, and security is what managers want; many authors and nearly all actors want it too. Abolish the National Licence to present and perform and the discipline of the theatre will pass to the police. That, in effect, means the Local Watch Committee; remove the Censor from his throne in St. James's Palace and a hundred censors will immediately take his place, censors, almost certainly, possessing no theatrical knowledge or general culture. No manager will know where he stands; what "gets through" in Birmingham may be banned in Manchester, for the local authorities who allot licences to theatres will at once use that power, as they sometimes do even now, to become dictators of taste and morals. At present the Censor's licence is generally regarded as valid over the whole country; remove it, and there will be no safety for anyone. The American example is not encouraging; the police there can and do walk in and "padlock" a theatre and impound the players on the information of a busybody and the order of a police "boss" who may be a complete ignoramus. On the whole our National Censorship is certainly the lesser evil.

But can we not, it may be asked, prevent this local interference if and when we abolish the Lord Chamberlain's veto? It is not going to be easy. For the theatre audience is a public meeting and public meetings demand public discipline. The buildings, for instance, must be licensed as being safe against risk of fire or collapse and, once the licensing system is admitted, it will almost inevitably be used to control the show as well as the structure. Supposing controversial plays on urgent political topics were commonly performed, the preservation of order would bring police supervision. Even in Paris, with its almost unfettered freedom of speech, *Coriolanus* was withdrawn by command at the time of the Stavisky riots. On the whole, then, there is a practical case for not throwing the half bricks of argument at St. James's Palace. The arguments, in isolation, are sound enough. But I should not care to see the Palace control of drama removed, if it meant domination by Chief Constables and City Councillors instead.

Miss Knowles has tabulated the recent activities of the Censor and of the anti-censorial party. Her book, which opens with a formidable list of "errata," has been carelessly written. Mr. Hubert Griffiths, who has himself suffered most unreasonably from the Censor's veto on a play about modern Russia, contributes a spirited introduction. But he should not describe *Young Woodley* as "One of the most faultless first plays." It was not a first play, and "most faultless" is not English. Miss Knowles talks about "the almost impossibility for plays of any subtle theatre quality to succeed in London" and handles a pen so clumsily as to make her book unnecessarily hard to read. Fortunately, the case was all stated long ago by Mr. Shaw in the best pamphleteering style of our time. And now I suppose that the Censor Question, having flared up like Easier Divorce and Brighter Cricket, will revert to a quiescent smouldering. In view of the likely alternative to the Lord Chamberlain's authority, that is not a bad thing. One accepts the irrational with regret, lest the worse, the still less rational, befall.

IVOR BROWN

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Sour Grapes"

Mr. Vincent Lawrence, with *Sour Grapes* now presented at the Apollo, establishes his right to a place, with perhaps a star or two, in the theatrical tipster's notebook. Although you may detect a confusion of purpose which is never thoroughly resolved in his mind, the piece is certainly one of the most exciting comedies of sophistication that we have had for some years. The excitement comes in a series of technical surprises, twists of character explored with a calm ruthlessness, hackneyed situations rejected and unusual ones developed. The curtain goes up upon a simple triangle situation, with the Overtons' charming, Milnish, modern domesticity threatened by the advances of one Milburn, a young man with a drawl and a way with him. The dialogue is incredibly flat and jejune, and one is resigned to the usual reshuffle and return to the *status quo*, when the husband reveals that he has long ceased to love his wife and that his only emotion is anger with himself for not being angry with her. Here is a tilt which promises something for the second act. It resolves itself into pure comedy of manners. Milburn's deserted fiancée reveals that she is to have a child, and Milburn reveals his gentlemanly vanity by insisting on marrying her at once. But this does not solve the Overtons' problem, concerning which far too much has already been said. The comedy between them becomes shriller and more bitter, as they resent more deeply their own indifference to each other. By the third act the note has become an embarrassing falsetto. The comedy of manners disappears and you get flashes of ironic tragedy in their realisation that romantic love is dead for them. They end up in a kind of fierce alliance against the gods which have decreed it. There are discrepancies in this story, and ill-cemented elements which at times threaten to bring it crashing down. But it never does crash, for all the overpitching. Mr. Nicholas Hannen is so good for two-thirds of the play that it is hard to condemn his attempt at the half-fantastic in the other third; but his naturally disarming technique, suggesting that he is secretly in love with his wife all the time, is ill-adapted to the author's purpose. No such flaw appears in Miss Constance Cummings' admirably polished sketch of modernity in the toils of its own cynicism. She ranges beautifully through a dozen moods and presents complexities of character with a certainty of touch which is thrilling to watch. Mr. Roger Livesey is, if anything, too good for the part of Milburn, who turns out to be merely a catalytic agent in the breakdown of the Overton ménage, but his love-scene at the beginning is one of the high lights of an immensely stimulating evening.

Aline MacMahon at the Capitol.

A Woman in Her Thirties, now showing at the Capitol, is the best and least ephemeral type of modern American film. Aline MacMahon has long been known for the excellence of her work as a feature-player, and it says a great deal for the perspicacity of American film magnates that she should now have been given an opportunity to appear in "starring" roles. The result is an extremely impressive picture. As the proprietress of a small but successful fur-shop in the back streets of San Francisco, Aline MacMahon marries a down-and-out sailor—brilliantly portrayed by Paul Kelly—bears a child, loses it, and eventually loses her husband to the young and pretty poor relation whom she has imported from New York to help her in her business. The story itself is as drab as a Gissing novel; what might otherwise have been an almost intolerably depressing drama of lower middle-class life, thanks to Miss MacMahon, her fine presence, the dignity, restraint and humour of her acting, reaches a level where such considerations are unimportant. The drabness of the theme becomes positively stimulating; to see the clever shop-woman, horn-rimmed spectacles clamped firmly on to her pale, handsome face, sell a fur coat—with one eye open for her husband and her flirtatious niece behind the scenes—is an experience that no film-goer ought to deny himself; for really good films are at a premium during the summer. The supporting cast, particularly the old sempstress, is worthy of an uncommonly distinguished production.

THE COMING WEEK

SATURDAY, August 18th—
Cricket. England *v.* Australia (5th Test Match), The Oval.

MONDAY, August 20th—
Golf. Boys' Open Championship, Leeds.

TUESDAY, August 21st—
Tour round the Tower of London, 2.30. Tickets can be obtained from the Secretary, King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, 10 Old Jewry, E.C.

WEDNESDAY, August 22nd—
"Family Affairs," Ambassadors Theatre.

THURSDAY, August 23rd—
"Blackbirds of 1934," Coliseum Theatre.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

We have all been introduced while young to Cowper's lines which begin "I am monarch of all I survey" and continue their commonplace moralising in an ugly canter. Reading them over I was in no doubt that "Their tameness was shocking to me," quite as shocking as that of "The beasts that roam over the plain" was to Alexander Selkirk. Yet once the poem had been filled with a certain glory and importance, since it was written as the sentiments of the man who had been the original of Robinson Crusoe. At twelve years old nothing on such a subject could be dull. And about the same period I remember reading an essay on *Selkirk and Crusoe*, the patronising tone of which was founded on an assumption that Selkirk was a more important fellow than Crusoe because he had really lived and that his story was more interesting because it was true. But from the details there given emerged the fact that Robinson Crusoe was written round the adventure of Selkirk as described by Captain Woodes Rogers. The story of how Selkirk, the master of the *Cinque Ports*, one of the vessels sailing with Captain Dampier, was left on the island at his own request after a quarrel with the Captain was no doubt related, as well as the story of how he was picked up and taken off the island four years afterwards, by Captain Rogers who had Captain Dampier as his pilot, so that we may guess that one of the reasons for visiting the island was to look for him. But I feel sure, though it is thirty years since I read the essay, that it did not point out that Crusoe was a man of very different character from his prototype, of so strong and devout a character that when Cowper began to make Selkirk soliloquise, he put Crusoe's moral reflections into his mouth. The man actually seems to have been a pleasure-loving Scot. In his will he left his property to be divided amongst sundry "loving female friends" with whom he had contracted intimacies which we may trust somewhat made up for the years of solitude upon the island. And even there, moreover, he would sing and dance with his goats. Robinson Crusoe was altogether too dignified, majestic, God-fearing, suspicious and Christian a character for such Arcadian diversions. This is what Crusoe says about his life with the goats:

> It would have made a stoic smile to have seen me and my little family sit down to dinner: there was my majesty, the prince and lord of the whole island; I had the lives of all my subjects at absolute command; I could hang, draw, give life and liberty, and take it away, and no rebels amongst all my subjects.

Nor did he apparently unbend with women since, apart from his business dealings with that honest gentlewoman, his friend's widow, the only conversation I can remember his having with a member of the opposite sex was "with the amiable young woman" who gave him "such a distinct account of starving to death as I confess I never met with; and was exceedingly entertaining to me." Those who have read Robinson Crusoe, Part II, will remember that she had preserved her life by drinking up a basin of her own blood.

* * *

Mr. William Hallam Bonner in a study of *Captain William Dampier* (Oxford University Press, 12*s.* 6*d.*), is largely concerned to prove that Dampier's *Voyages* were the chief source utilised by Defoe not only in *Robinson Crusoe*, but in *Captain Singleton*, *A New Voyage Round the World*, *Colonel Jacque*, *Captain Avery*, etc., and by Swift in *Gulliver's Travels*. This is not by any means an original discovery, as Sir Walter Scott laid stress on Dampier's influence and gave his opinion that Defoe must have been acquainted with him as well as with his books. But Mr. Bonner has performed a most interesting and useful piece of work by showing to how great an extent Dampier was used as a source. Unfortunately, although he has evidence enough to prove his case up to the hilt, he sometimes makes remarks which make one doubt his critical faculties, or, at all events, his common sense. Thus:

> It may be to the point to recall that Gulliver progressed, as Dampier did, from a lesser office on shipboard to the "captaincy of several ships."

Had they both commenced their maritime careers by commanding vessels it would indeed have been worth pointing out, but that they reached the rank of Captain as all other sailors must, is not remarkable. It is equally foolish and superfluous of Mr. Bonner carefully to point out that he cannot claim that all of Swift's writing can be shown to be influenced by Dampier and does not maintain that Swift's prose style was due to Dampier. However,

> What may be said is that the two styles are in general of the same kind, "clear, masculine and smooth, but not florid," as Captain Gulliver describes the style of the Brobdingnagians. . . . Two minds with so much of the same downrightness, meeting as they surely did, could not fail to be drawn together.

However, such comments detract very little from the value of the book. We can all judge Swift's mind for ourselves, according to our capacities, and must be grateful to anyone who points out where Swift found the framework in which to set his picture.

* * *

There is no doubt about the framework. Swift possessed a copy of Dampier's voyages and Gulliver follows the same routes and meets much the same kind of weather in the same parts of the world as Dampier did. And then, because Dampier met with various disgusting kinds of savages, we are asked to consider him as the source which put the Yahoos into Swift's mind. Strangely enough there appears to be a whole literature on the subject of where Swift can have got them from. Are they derived from Sir Thomas Herbert's Hottentots? Or, as Mr. Bonner prefers to think, are they the natives of New Holland described by Dampier, who tells us they are:

> the miserablest people in the World. The Hodmadods of Monomatapa though a nasty people, yet for Wealth are Gentlemen to these.

But Mr. Bonner has to admit that:

> Dampier had no morbid curiosity about sex. . . . The lecherous nature of the Yahoos, as also their bearded condition, therefore, derived from elsewhere.

Yes, indeed. The Dean of St. Patrick's may perhaps have seen the Yahoos when he walked through the Dublin alleys, or he may have thought of them when he went to a fine tea-party and listened to *Polite Conversation*. The Houyhnhnms anyway are pretty certainly Irish and their descendants might have been seen two or three weeks ago at the Horse Show.

* * *

Defoe's debt seems at first sight a more straightforward affair but since nobody can accuse him of being, like Swift, a downright character, it is just as possible to go astray about his intentions. He had an extraordinary capacity for inventing humdrum circumstantial details which reaches its height in the *Journal of the Plague Year* in which he provides pages of made-up statistics of the mortality day-by-day in various London parishes, and only occasionally flashes out an unforgettable episode such as that of the plague-struck man who rushed naked into the streets, ran down to the river, swam over to Lambeth and back in his delirium and returned home perfectly cured. His *New Voyage Round the World* is, in the same way, a circumstantial account of a voyage which at first sight only differs from actual records owing to the fact that it did not take place. In it he gives a description of an Australian continent which always puzzled me, and Mr. Bonner has no difficulty in showing that he got it from Dampier, though maps showing Australia date back to Henry VIII. Mr. Bonner takes Defoe as a serious advocate of colonisation, but this is to mistake his character as much as it is to call him a champion of the Nonconformists, which many of his biographers have done. Directly Defoe took up his pen he was acting a part. I do not believe that he felt the slightest desire to improve the world by preaching Nonconformist morality. He was a hypocrite through and through because he was an artist, and a popular journalist thinking always of what would sell or of how to tell the tale.

DAVID GARNETT

ART

Art. By ERIC GILL. The Twentieth Century Library. *Lane.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Eric Gill writes with the expressed intention of "debunking art." But those who are fond of art need not be anxious. He concludes by remarking that the artist is "friend and brother to the saint," and that good art is "holy."

His main theme is the theme of William Morris—art is skill in making, every responsible workman is an artist, and there is something grim about the mechanised civilisation which has deprived almost all workmen of responsibility. Well, of course, one cannot possibly quarrel with *that* idea. Yet it is sometimes difficult not to quarrel with it, as here presented.

In the first place, Mr. Gill's tone is uncongenial: he seems to be, not denouncing the modern world, but nagging at it: he is "in that state of mind that he wants to deny *something*." And then, his arguments are often muddled, and sometimes amazingly naive. For instance: he wants to prove that works of art are always "of physical utility" as well as pleasing, and selects as an example patterned wall-papers—more useful than plain walls because *they hide the dirt!* And then, quite unconsciously abandoning his position: "It may well be said that the most useful art is that of entertainment; for there is no point in entertainment unless it be in some way health-giving to our souls; whereas a house is worse than useless if you cannot bear the sight of it; for there is no point in a shelter if it only makes you miserable." I wonder if Mr. Gill would really stick to this, say, in a thunderstorm. He might find (to adapt a phrase of Carlyle's about tobacco) that he would rather be dry and miserable than wet and miserable. As for the converse idea, that everything functionally sound is beautiful, it is one of those attractive notions that just don't seem to be true.

Of course, his stick to beat the modern world is mediaevalism; but at the same time he makes the Middle Ages less intelligent, and less sensitive to beauty, than can possibly have been the case. They realised, he says, the existence of statues but not of sculpture: painting and shoemaking were to them on the same level: all they cared about in a picture was the subject of it. "Before the Renaissance you bought, say, a Madonna. To-day you buy, say, a Cézanne or an Orpen—or even a Lutyens. But in engineering you still buy bridges and not specimens of the work of such and such an engineer." (Do you really, when it comes to bridge-building, choose your engineer out of a hat?) Before 1500 "there is no business about signing the work, except for fun and in secret . . . if anyone gets any of the pride of self-expression into it, it is more likely to be the customer than the workman." After 1500 "the individual poet, the individual musician, emerges as an artist known by name, just as the individual architect and painter and sculptor were emerging."

If so, it was surely very fortunate: you see a picture that pleases you, you want more like it, and the artist's name directs you where to look. But was anonymity, and a levelling of the "fine arts" with shoemaking, really characteristic of the Middle Ages?

Dante in Purgatory met Oderisi, the illuminator, expiating pride: Dante saluted him, by name of course, as the "honour" of his native place and of his art. But Oderisi in humility transferred the praise to a brother illuminator, Franco of Bologna, and then began to expatiate on the emptiness of fame.

> Oh powers of man! how vain your glory, nipped
> E'en in its height of verdure, if an age
> Less bright succeed not. Cimabue thought
> To lord it over painting's field; and now
> The cry is Giotto's, and his name eclipsed.
> Thus hath one Guido from the other snatched
> The lettered prize. . . .

So it seems they knew about painting as well as pictures; and they cared who did them; and there was "honour" and "glory" in the doing of them. And would it really have been all the same if Dante had chosen highly skilled shoemakers to point his moral? "Mr. Jones once thought to hold the field in shoemaking, but now. . . ." Oderisi's companions in the circle of pride are not shoemakers or carpenters but nobles.

Mr. Gill is full of minor contradictions and absurdities. He girds at the idea of "self-expression," and girds at machines for not allowing it. He talks of the "secular inspiration" of Sir Christopher Wren, yet believes that "art and religion are inseparable," "art is holy." He quotes from St. Thomas: "The beautiful thing is that which being seen pleases," and then adds: "This is an obvious fact. . . . The only difficulty is with regard to the meaning attached to the words 'seen' and 'pleases'" (!) And so on. In a more generous book these things might pass. But Mr. Gill's mixture of venom and moral hedging is unpalatable. He is condemning no one, he assures us—merely stating facts; he reminds us of "the strict injunction to 'judge not.'" Quite: why should one "judge" when a sneer is so effective?

K. JOHN

CIVILISATIONS

A Study of History. By ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE. Vols. I–III. *Oxford University Press.* 21*s.* each volume. 52*s.* 6*d.* the set.

The sweep and scope of this work are so magnificent that the reviewer must feel that it is an impertinence, in both senses, to attempt to deal with it in a few hundred words. You cannot photograph the universe with a kodak camera, though you may take excellent snapshots with it of your friends bathing or your cat lapping milk. Professor Toynbee's three volumes already amount to about 1,500 pages, and it appears from the plan of the whole work, given in the first volume, that there must be another ten volumes to follow. The writer who attempts anything on such a scale takes his life and reputation in his hands; he will produce something which must be either their grave or their monument. There can be no doubt that Professor Toynbee's courage has been justified. It is, of course, not possible to assess the exact value of his study, in its present stage, but one can say definitely that it is a work of the highest interest and greatest importance.

A Study of History is a title which reflects the author's modesty. The book is really an investigation into the nature of civilisation and into the causes of the genesis, growth, breakdown, and disintegration of civilisations. Professor Toynbee's method is empirical. He first establishes the fact that there are certain societies which can be distinguished from the societies of primitive man and which are called civilisations. He shows that in the history of the human race the first civilisation arose some 6,000 years ago, and that since that date another twenty representatives of the species civilisation have come into existence. Of these twenty-one civilisations fourteen are extinct and seven are still living. In these three volumes he deals with their genesis and their growth, with such questions as how the first civilisations came into existence, the relations between different civilisations, the causes of their decay, and the process by which new civilisations have emerged from the debris of an older civilisation's dissolution.

It is impossible here to give any idea of what with another author one might call the book's conclusions. Almost any fifty pages of the work taken at random would furnish speculations and "conclusions" of the highest importance sufficient to keep most other writers going for four or five volumes and to provide "material" for a whole lifetime of reviews. Nor is it possible to convey to anyone who has not read these volumes the really stupendous range of learning upon which the author draws, and yet the lightness, grace, and often wit with which he uses it both as an instrument of historical investigation and of literary adornment. His method is too detailed to make any cursory explanation or criticism possible. In order to establish any historical conclusion he examines in minute detail and compares an enormous number of historical facts. We can only indicate some of the important conclusions which he establishes in these three volumes. For instance in the first volume he disposes of the theories that race or environment is the cause of the genesis of civilisation. This investigation leads him to the conclusion that the genesis of civilisation is caused by the successful response by a society to a challenge, which may come either from the physical environment or from human beings outside the society or from within the society itself. Volume two is concerned with the nature of these challenges, of the responses successful and unsuccessful which societies at different times and places have made to them. Volume three is concerned with the growth as distinguished from the genesis of civilisations and is largely occupied by a fascinating discussion of a principle of "withdrawal and return" which Professor Toynbee shows to be of the highest importance both for societies and individuals.

We have referred more than once to Professor Toynbee's immense learning, and his work is in the best sense both learned and

"scientific." It is not a book which can be recommended to those who require books to be short, knowledge to be tabloids of facts, and theories without the evidence. Yet there has been no new book published since the war which any one with a healthy appetite for print and speculation will read with greater excitement and enjoyment. One reason is that Professor Toynbee always keeps his speculation near to contemporary problems and he is never afraid to take us over direct from the crisis of say the Sumerian civilisation to what appears to be the existing crisis in our own.

There is only one criticism or rather note of interrogation which one is inclined to offer at this stage. Professor Toynbee often seems to suggest a mystic interpretation or explanation of human history. No one has the right to object to this, even if he do not share and therefore cannot accept the metaphysical postulates implied. But closely connected with the author's mysticism is a habit of arguing by means of analogy, simile, or metaphor. Some of the most illuminating and suggestive passages in these volumes, it must be admitted, are those in which Professor Toynbee is using this method. But for the historical investigator, working on his scale and with his scrupulous regard for exactitude, the method has great dangers, as indeed he in at least one passage seems to recognise. The known causal connections of facts *a*, *b*, and *c* may help to throw light by analogy upon the unknown causal connections of facts *x*, *y*, and *z*, but there is always a considerable danger, if the two series be at all complicated, of exaggerating the similarities and turning what started as an analogy into an identity.

LEONARD WOOLF

MURDERS AND MYSTERIES

Mystery on Southampton Water. By FREEMAN WILLS CROFT. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Murder on the Cliff. By CLIVE RYLAND. *Grayson and Grayson.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Frozen Death. By ANTHONY WEYMOUTH. *Barker.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Mystery of the Cape Cod Players. By PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Murder Calling. By DAVID WHITELAW. *Geoffrey Bles.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The Charge is Murder. By J. M. SPENDER. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

The fixed gulf between the detective story and the thriller has never been very successfully bridged, although writers seem loath to admit that the feat is impossible. And it is easy enough to understand this desire to include the best of both worlds in one book. The thriller has all the excitement ready to hand, while the detective story can contain all the intellectual stimulant. Why not combine the two, and get rid of the tedious padding and shallow love-interest generally included in detective works, and at the same time put a dash of lemon in the thriller—which almost sickens in a full-length novel by the unending streams of blood and thunder—by giving the reader a solid problem on which to keep his wits at work? The reason why this theoretical ideal cannot be reached so easily, I believe, lies in the mental attitudes of the readers of both categories. The nature of the thriller is to titillate, that of detective stories to challenge. The man engaged in solving a problem will refuse to let his attention be diverted or relaxed by the glamour of excitement; he will merely be annoyed at its intrusion. And anyone indulging in an emotional response is equally annoyed at finding himself challenged to solve a problem; he will refuse to be bothered and be content to wait for the answer to be provided for him in due course.

The latest attempts to provide both thrills and detection are called "Mystery" novels, and the word "Mystery" generally appears in the title. It would be a good thing if the word "Murder" was reserved for detective stories proper, and then we should know where we were, when looking at the library shelves. Mr. Wills Croft, always conscientious, has called his latest work a "Mystery," because, presumably, it is not a purely detective novel. The first part of the book openly describes how a night watchman was accidentally killed while a felony was being committed, and the subsequent attempts of the felons to stage a "Rouse," in order to dispose of the body. Then, enter Inspector French; the burnt body in the car is quickly recognised as no victim of accident, and the Inspector is well on the trail of the criminals, when a second murder is committed. This time the reader is not let into the secret of who did it, so that the book concludes with a real detective finish, with the Inspector picking the right solution for you in the final chapters. I have described *Mystery on Southampton Water* in some detail, because it does not fall clearly into any category, not even that of a "Mystery." Mr. Wills Croft has not the style for arousing hectic excitement, but he has always excelled in the sound construction of his plots and the painstaking accuracy of his detail. No constant admirer of his detective novels will be disappointed by this one, but I doubt if he will gain a new following from the thriller brigade of readers. *Murder Calling* and *The Charge is Murder* are both "Mysteries"; and I recommend the first to those who wish to sample this new hybrid. Mr. David Whitelaw is an experienced writer of thrillers with the polished technique of a professional. His story concerns the murder of the murderer of a murderer, and the police are rigorously excluded from its pages. Intended blackmail by a solicitor's clerk, abetted by a female accomplice who is good at dressing up as a housekeeper, is the thread round which all the action is crystallised. The hero is a young air pilot, who not only saves everyone worth saving from the clutches of everyone else, but even from themselves, and indeed goes so far as to solve the ultimate murder, by the simple method of intimidating the villain until he confesses all; his name is Nigel. *The Charge is Murder*, which describes the activities of drug smugglers in Sydney, with a murder thrown in, is too crude and amateurish to give any satisfaction either in the thrills or the solution.

Murder on the Cliff is a well-written and exciting detective story in the traditional manner. There is a double murder on the Cornish cliffs, a variety of suspects in the houses all round, Scotland Yard detectives with actress friends, a process of elimination and a last round-up. Mr. Ryland has a very readable, lively style and concentrates in the most laudable way on essentials. His *dénouement* took me utterly by surprise and yet was perfectly valid.

Two new detectives are introduced in *Frozen Death* and *The Mystery of the Cape Cod Players* (both ordinary, very ordinary, detective novels). Miss Taylor's Asey Mayo is a sad example of the jack-of-all-trades detective, one who can turn his hand to anything and excels in every department of life he deigns to enter, at the same time remaining, as you can well believe, *utterly* unspoilt. Inspector Treadgold of *Frozen Death* is a restless little man, with a trick of inconsequent remarks which are meant to give him a character, but I could not discover what it was. His business is to discover how exactly the Earl of Prentice came to be found frozen in his park at eight in the morning, when so many persons who had no reason for loving him had flimsy alibis for the night before. The criminal is insufficiently concealed from the first, and the red herrings lost their savour for at least one reader. *The Mystery of the Cape Cod Players* has considerable ingenuity, apart from the tiresome Asey Mayo who solves it. The landscape for the action is a foggy peninsula on the eastern seaboard of the U.S.A., to which a troupe of travelling players come, lured by the offer of an engagement, only to have their leading *jeune premier* bumped off the night they arrive. In this case the criminal was not so easily spotted, and the solution came with some surprise. The dialogue is not only American, and slang, but provincial American slang, so that even some of the Americans in the book had difficulty in understanding it.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

JUDAISM AS OTHERNESS

Essays in Jewish History. By LUCIEN WOLF. Edited by CECIL ROTH. *The Jewish Historical Society of England.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Judaism as a Civilisation. By MORDECAI M. KAPLAN. *Macmillan.* 21*s.*

Clannish and cosmopolitan, fervent and sceptical, home-loving and adventurous, mean and munificent, contentious and pacific, obsequious and insolent, artistic and uncreative, beneficiaries of capitalism and its keenest critics, the Jews are remarkable not so much for particular qualities as for combining qualities which appear contradictory. Indeed, I should say that the only generic Jewish characteristics are energy and the will to make this energy felt. A lazy Jew is almost unheard of, and a Jew who hides his light under a bushel is very rare. The more unpleasant qualities attributed to Jews are largely the direct result of persecution; and it is painful experience which has made many of them, for instance, at once over-quick to take offence and over-ready to submit to any snub in order to attain their object. They have been the scapegoats of Christendom, especially since their emancipation: whatever goes wrong, whether there is an unwished-

for war or a humiliating peace, whether the poor are oppressed by the rich or the rich are murdered by the poor, it is the fault of the Jews. (Jesuits and Freemasons, and, on the Continent, Englishmen, are sometimes cast for the same role.) The present age has brought them their greatest glory and almost their worst distress—Einstein, Freud, Proust, Trotsky, on the one hand, Nazi Germany on the other. And there is a causal connection between their triumphs and their disasters, for the Jew plays a part in the State like alcohol in the body, enlivening in small quantities, but an overdose causes disturbance and even expulsion. In Republican Germany, because the Jews were more intelligent than the Germans, their power was out of all proportion to their numbers. In this country anti-Semitism is mild, because they play a valuable part but do not preponderate. Incidentally it was lucky for them Disraeli decided to be a Conservative, for if he had been a Liberal anti-Semitism might have become a Tory plank.

It would be agreeable to believe that there is no longer any important difference between Jew and Gentile, in fact that the Jewish problem is merely traditional and imaginary. My Jewish friends are as sceptical about the Pentateuch as I am, and they play tennis as willingly on Saturdays as I do on Sundays. In all questions, philosophical, political or aesthetic, their views are in no way specifically Jewish. But read books like Mr. Wolf's and Mr. Kaplan's, written by Jews and chiefly for Jews, and you become aware of a great gulf. Neither of these authors would consider themselves reactionary, but they both insist upon the "otherness" of the Jews. Mr. Wolf says of his generation that "it has with all its occidental culture a steadier, loftier, and more constant attachment to Judaism—to the race and history which it knows, as well as to the religion after which it gropes, than was ever known in the Mediaeval Ghetto." And Mr. Kaplan says: "The task now before the Jew is to save the otherness of Jewish life"; and he urges his fellows to regard Judaism as a nationality based on a separate civilisation. He does not seem to realise that his plea justifies the theory (though not the excesses) of anti-Semitism, and he is, of course (unlike Mr. Wolf) a Zionist. His book seems to be based upon confused thinking and a desire both to have a cake and eat it.

The textual critic and the anthropologist have made orthodox Judaism a religion no longer tenable by the educated; moreover, the ritual observances which it entails make economic competition with Gentiles impossible. Mr. Kaplan admits this, and, indeed, it is for this reason that he insists upon Judaism being a civilisation and not a faith. But surely we have a right to demand of Jews a choice. Either they are a separate nation, in which case they cannot reasonably claim to become politicians, soldiers, or newspaper proprietors in any country except Palestine; or they are not a separate nation, in which case they must accept either internationalism or the citizenship of their adopted countries wholeheartedly, and be prepared to lose their racial identity by intermarriage. Personally, I hope they will take the latter course. They have much to give us. The Jews add enormously, for instance, to the vitality of London. Without their activity the arts would suffer, although specifically Jewish art is apt to neglect the virtues of restraint: it is too brilliant, too florid, or too emotional. (Blues music, I should say, is the characteristic expression of modern Jewry.) Intellectually, the Jews often possess a magnificent lucidity, and altogether their virtues seem to be complementary to those of Northern Europeans. Moreover, Jewish blood improves, I think, with dilution: Montaigne and Proust, for instance, both had Gentile fathers and Jewish mothers. If one accepts these views Zionism appears a step backwards. There are unexploited lands where refugee Jews could have been settled; and the choice of a country already inhabited, and rich with memories that would be better forgotten, is likely not only to be a cause of strife but also to delay the absorption of the Jews into the other populations of the world.

Mr. Kaplan at one point seems to admit the hollowness of his theme. He accepts all the destructive criticism of the Scriptures. He wishes Jews to neglect ritual laws when among Gentiles, and to observe them in their homes as "folk-ways" symbolic of nationality. He then says, "Take religion out and Judaism becomes an empty shell." But the vague deism which he wishes to retain has no survival-value, and it seems to me absurd to expect people to keep ham and shrimps out of their larders because these foods were taboo to their Bronze Age ancestors, merely in order to remind themselves that they are different from the Americans or Englishmen in the house next door.

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Mr. Wolf's essays are collected in honour of his memory from his historical and occasional writings. They are inspired by a reasonable interest and pride in the past of his people: a pride which might survive the disappearance of organised Jewry, as pride in their Quaker ancestors survives among those who have married out of the meeting-house. There are interesting chapters on old Anglo-Jewish families, showing Jewish blood in the most unexpected places, including at different times the families of the Duke of Norfolk, Lord Bute, Lord Grey de Ruthyn, Lord Auckland, Lord Loudoun and Lord Houghton. More recently Lord Rosebery and Lord Curzon married ladies of Jewish extraction, and such marriages seem the only satisfactory solution of the Jewish problem. For as long as the Jews remain race-conscious they will be persecuted; and as long as they are persecuted they will remain race-conscious.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

SEX AND MARRIAGE

Three Essays on Sex and Marriage. By EDWARD WESTERMARCK. *Macmillan.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

The Freudian theory of the unconscious, useful as it may be therapeutically and valuable as it unquestionably is as a working hypothesis in experimental psychology, is becoming an anthropological nuisance, and it is more than agreeable to follow Dr. Westermarck in his opening essay which is a spirited onslaught upon the Oedipus Complex and the absurdities of "the primeval sacrifice" which have been grafted upon it. Particularly neat is Dr. Westermarck's contention that, in any case, even if there was such a complex it is badly misnamed, for had Oedipus been moved by it he would have murdered his foster-father and married his foster-mother. He is not so happy when he summarily dismisses Sir James Frazer's contention that if there had not been a general tendency towards incest it would not have been so severely penalised. It is true that Sir James rather overstated the case and dated the hypothetical tendency too late in our history; but it does seem reasonable to believe that exogamy arose not from a "natural" aversion to incest, but from a natural desire for peace within the family. Powerful taboos induce habits of thought, and such habits in the course of time, for all their continuously cultural origin, take on the appearance of natural desires or aversions, and in this sense Dr. Westermarck is probably right when he assumes that the majority of adults, primitive or civilised, have at any rate *believed* for millenniums that there exists a "natural" aversion to incest. The essay which follows deals with some recent theories of exogamy, but it would seem that Dr. Westermarck is unaware of the theory formulated by Mrs. Hartley Gascoigne which accounts not only for exogamy but also for the way in which a matriarchy could derive from the primitive family conjectured by Darwin and adopted by Freud, and, with reservations, by Dr. Westermarck. The third essay deals faithfully with "The Mothers" by Dr. Robert Briffault, a work in which Dr. Westermarck's theories of monogamy, and the facts upon which they are based, were treated with almost unbelievable disingenuousness. The book as a whole is in every way worthy of the historian of marriage, and is indeed a valuable supplement to the famous history.

AN AMERICAN RADICAL

The Story of My Life. By CLARENCE DARROW. *Watts.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Darrow is an American "radical," a term of general opprobrium in that country implying, as it does, a spirit of rebellion against all the orthodoxies and respectabilities, religious, political, economic, social. He was born into this temper, for his parents were "freethinkers," a terrible charge in a country where to be a thinker at all is suspect. Having a gift for controversial speech, he naturally drifted into the legal profession, and soon made himself notorious as a defending counsel in unpopular cases, being in great demand not only in Chicago, where for the larger part of his life he was "settled," but in Los Angeles, Detroit, New York, and many other centres of disorder and crime. His strong support of Governor Altgeld in pardoning the Chicago Anarchists in 1892, and his active campaign for civic reform, made him widely known in radical circles all over America, and from that time on he figured as a leading personality in most of the sensational dramas of crime, defending in 1906 the miners charged with the murder of ex-Governor Stennenberg of Idaho, in 1911 the McNamaras who dynamited the Los Angeles *Times* Building, the juvenile Loeb-Leopold murderers in 1924, and returning from old-age retirement to undertake the defence of Mrs. Fortesque and Lieutenant Massie in the recent amazing Honolulu trial.

But the value of this book lies in the commentary it furnishes upon the seamy side of American civilisation. It may, no doubt, be said with reason that one cannot look to the career of a criminal lawyer for a representative picture of the national life and character. But many of the cases handled in these chapters are of a very disconcerting character, for they reveal not merely the wide prevalence of criminal acts in the ordinary course of economic and political life, but an attitude of the public towards illegal action in which habitual indifference to moral and equitable standards is broken by fierce outbursts of herd passion. What Bryce and other observers have called the "tyranny of the multitude" works terrible havoc when the cry of syndicalism, anarchism, socialism is raised against persons charged with an unpopular sort of crime. For some sorts of crimes have always been condoned in America, whose States spawn laws which few citizens know or care about. The defiance of the Volstead Act by myriads of respectable citizens well illustrates the remark made by Matthew Arnold that "the Americans sit lightly by their arrangements."

But Mr. Darrow is by no means content to expose the ways in which big business men and their politicians operate the making and administration of laws to suit their profit and convenience. The "framing" of cases, the packing of juries, the partisan conduct of elected judges, with mob fury at their heels, are cited by a rationalist and a humanitarian as evidence of the small percentage of reason and humanity discernible in social conduct.

The later chapters of Mr. Darrow's "Story" are given to philosophical reflections upon life as he sees it. The result of these reflections is to bring out in an interesting manner a fundamental contradiction in his type of rationalism. Man, being the product of a physical make up with hormones that determine his character, and an environment not of his making, "is not in any true sense 'responsible' for his actions, or deserving of praise

NUDISM—From Six Points of View

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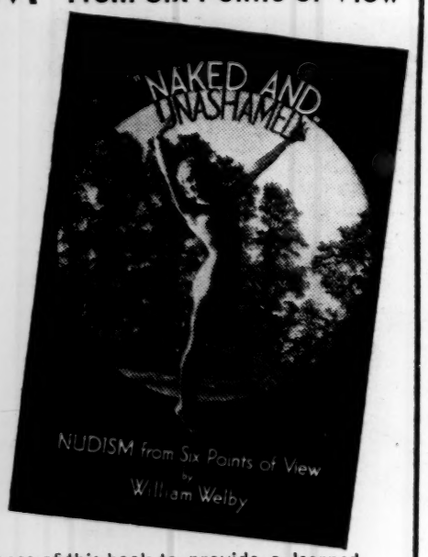

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or blame for what he is or does." And yet the praise and blame and the other attributes of values, irrational as they may be, are facts, and as such demand to be explained in terms of that "evolution" which Mr. Darrow championed in the most melodramatic incident of his career, when he stood against William Jennings Bryan in the famous fundamentalist trial at Dayton, Tennessee. Now Mr. Darrow refuses to admit any evidence of design or purpose in the universe or in the life of man. But it is difficult to conceive a process of evolution without some determinant order, and if order, then plan, if plan, then purpose. Mr. Darrow sees the danger of being landed with a creative mind, some sort of deity. Since this must be avoided at all costs, he is driven to jettison order itself and to fall back upon "chance" (p. 418) as the sole determinant.

But I would not end upon this note of criticism. For we have here the record of a life spent unsparingly in the struggle for liberty, justice and humanity among a people where these principles are almost submerged in the tide of economic and racial conflicts.

J. A. HOBSON

A CONSERVATIVE HISTORY OF SPAIN

The History of Spain. By LOUIS BERTRAND and Sir CHARLES PETRIE. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 18*s.*

It is easier to forgive those who vilify us than those who explain us away. Hence the long-standing resentment of the Spaniard against his French interpreter. An extreme man, the Spaniard is prepared to endure the injustice of the "black legend," recognising its fanatic origin, where the bedside manner of his intellectual neighbour across the Pyrenees infuriates him. The English reader therefore picks up a new Spanish history by a Frenchman with the pleasantly superior feeling that now the fun is going to begin. But on this occasion there is no fun of the usual kind to be had. M. Bertrand is an eloquent defender of Spain. He is in many ways admirable.

If he is also disconcerting it is because he has attempted a simplification of Spanish history. In the first place he takes for granted the importance usually given to the Roman and Visigothic occupations and opens with the Arab conquest. Nearly half the book is devoted to a long and furious attack upon the Moors and a reluctant admission of the residue of virtue left to them. A hundred pages then dispose of the American discoveries and the Spanish hegemony, and the remaining period from the end of the sixteenth century to the present day is telescoped into a hundred and seventy pages. This latter section has actually been amplified by Sir Charles Petrie and here the narrative has lost its early fighting, critical and interpretative qualities and has become not much more than a political catalogue. What is missing is vital: some account of the ideas in conflict. To be just, M. Bertrand's underlying thesis, that Spain has suffered throughout history, through subjection to uncongenial foreign ideas, attempts to support these dull pages. But one gathers that the presence of liberal ideas since the middle of the eighteenth century has led the authors to the despairing and perfunctory. The point is made that the anti-clericalism of Charles III, and particularly his suppression of the Jesuits, fatally weakened the monarchy and may have been fundamentally responsible for the loss of the colonies. Sir Charles Petrie seems to hold that the strength of the monarchy lay with the Carlists and not with the pseudo-liberal victors. This is arguable. There is room for a conservative view of modern Spanish history, but the summary methods of the last part of this book do not give it a chance. One concludes later that the authors, though presenting a balanced view of the virtues and shortcomings of Primo de Rivera and the last of the Bourbons, have no idea that any opposition existed or why; and the uninitiated reader, if he accepts only the evidence of these pages, will be as surprised by the triumph of the Republicans as the Monarchists were. To ignore the opposition is as dangerous to the effectiveness of historians as it is to the power of a monarch.

The Arab section of the book is by far the most important. It suffers in reasonableness, though it gains in emphasis, from taking too seriously those fanatical writers who regarded the ultimate victory of the Spaniards over the Arabs as the triumph of bigotry and superstition over civilisation; and the Spanish decadence as the just punishment of a Protestant God. No intelligent student of Spanish history has thought that for a long time. M. Bertrand goes spiritedly to the other extreme. Influenced by residence in Morocco, he seems rather rashly to have taken descendants of the Arabs and Berbers in their present decadence as a safe guide to what they were like during their Spanish ascendancy; and on the whole he thinks the conquest to have been a calamity. The Moors were barbarians. They had no art, no civilisation. If they became civilised it was because of their contact with the Spaniards. They inherited what was left of the material heritage of the Romans in Spain. They were ferociously cruel, given to endless civil strife among themselves, and their anarchic parasitic influence permanently damaged the Spanish character. The achievements in domestic art and agriculture commonly attributed to them were really the work of the Spanish peasant inheriting his Roman training. So M. Bertrand. The real Arab achievements he admits—one can hardly gloss over the Alhambra and the mosque at Cordoba—and, after reading cooler historians, one concludes that the quarrel, if any, is one of emphasis. He makes great play, for example, with the denial—it occurs twice in case the cautious reader should have doubted it the first time—that the Arabs introduced agricultural improvements, especially denouncing the common view that they were responsible for the ancient and remarkable irrigation system. I turn to Altamira, who, after all, has no little authority, and I read:

> The admirable development of scientific, literary and artistic culture in Spain under the Muslims, rested on a firm basis of general prosperity in all classes. The Muslims encouraged the progress of agriculture, both by bettering the conditions of the agricultural labourers (the greater part of them Mozarabes) by introducing new crops (rice, pomegranates, sugar cane) and by extending and regulating the system of irrigation.

Altamira describes how stock raising, mining, and the manufacture of wool, silk, esparto grass, writing paper, arms, leather and glass were similarly fostered.

The fact is that M. Bertrand is divided between immoderate contempt and admiration. But the result is a detailed and vivid picture. In his defence of the Cid against the sceptics he is seen at his noblest; and the joint observations on the Spanish character are to the point. It is a pity that the book did not continue in his fighting vein.

V. S. PRITCHETT

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Probably the fifteenth century is the least likely era in which to seek "merry England," and there is parlous little merriment to be discovered in the content of this post-bag. It is possible that letter-writing to our fifteenth-century ancestors was exclusively a serious business. But, all allowances made, it must be admitted that the Pastons, Plumptons, Stonors, Celys, Shillingfords and their correspondents, if an instructive are not a gay company. Margery Brews, one likes to think, had a merry eye; and one hopes that the John Paston who married her had the wit to value a spirit so un-Pastonish. Persiflage, presumably, was the prerogative of the nobler or lewder sort. Yet Chaucer was not far away and the Elizbethans were at hand, closer at hand than might been expected; for more than once we catch in these letters the authentic thought of Hamlet's "tedious old fools." But if the England Miss Lyell has plundered for our benefit—her introduction is quite the best thing in the book—is not merry, it has all those solid and sober qualities that lead us through enclosures and poor-laws to the industrial revolution, the qualities indeed that have made us what, and put us where, we are.

Week-end Competitions

No. 231

Set by Gerald Barry

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(*b*) Would you keep it?

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RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, August 24th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The results of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION 229

Set by V. S. Pritchett

It is understood, on rather bad authority, that Hollywood has bought the film rights of Shakespeare's *Othello*. Obviously, the story as it stands is quite unsuitable for presentation to the great American public, and a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea are therefore offered for the best summary of the Hollywood version of the play. This can take the form of extracts from the scenario if desired, and competitors may also, if they wish, quote some of the talkie dialogue. Length not to exceed 400 words.

Report by V. S. Pritchett

Competitors were fewer than usual, but they surpassed themselves in wit. Their knowledge of the American "slanguage" was awe-inspiring. Nearly every entry contained hints which Hollywood should be glad to have. "Sach Novics'" ten men in a gondola singing, *O Sole Mio!* is a gem; and so is Lionel Millard's last shot of Othello sitting "in loin-cloth loneliness silhouetted against the sunset, together with minarets and palms." Many competitors made Cassio the hero. It surprised me that no one made Iago the husband and Othello the would-be black lover and murderer. The weakness of *Othello*, from Hollywood's point of view, is surely that Desdemona was allowed to *marry* a coloured man; she should only have been tempted by him. Mr. Usborne assures me all this Sheik-stuff died with Rudolf Valentino and that the only thing to do with the play is to shake well and pour out into fizzy comedy. His version entertained but did not convince me. Some competitors thought it sufficient to re-write the story in American slang: it was not. The final choice, as always in this type of competition, was between the improbable but funny and the dreadfully probable. The candidates were Allan M. Laing, James Hall (whose Cassio is palmed off as Desdemona's brother), Lionel Millard, "Sach Novics," Richard Usborne and William Bliss. Perhaps the dreadful probability of Lionel Millard's version ought to have it; but "Sach Novics'" ghastly titles seemed funnier and even more probable. So the order is:

First Prize: "Sach Novics."
Second Prize: Lionel Millard.

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EXTRACT FROM FILM

Burning with fury, Othello rushes home to accuse Desdemona with the proof of her infidelity. He finds her asleep in bed.

"You dirty little tramp." (He seizes her by the arm and drags her out of bed.)

He shows her the handkerchief, but she denies that she was ever at Cassio's house.

OTHELLO: "Aw, quit playing around with me, will you? I tell you that I got the low down on your little game, you little tramp. I'm through with you, I tell you."

(She flings her arms round his neck, crying.)

OTHELLO: "You don't want to take what's coming to you, do you? Well, you gonna take it and like it, see."

DESDEMONA: "I ain't done nothing, honest I ain't. No, no, don't kill me."

But Desdemona's maid has been listening outside the door, and now she hurries away as fast as she can to Cassio to warn him of what's going on. Meanwhile Othello is chasing Desdemona round and round the room. Cassio hurries into his gondola, rowed by ten lusty men, who sing *O Sole Mio*, as they row.

Othello has caught Desdemona and thrown her on the bed.

Cassio hastens the men along by quickening the *tempo* of the chorus, which he leads himself.

Othello is smothering Desdemona; she struggles wildly. The gondola pulls up at the house and the men leap out, oars in hand, headed by Cassio.

Desdemona has ceased struggling now.

Cassio and his trusty men break down the door to Desdemona's room and rush in. Othello, seeing all is lost, rushes to the window and jumps out.

CASSIO: "After him, boys. Lynch him, the dirty nigger."

The men rush after him. Othello jumps from the balcony into the gondola; he rows away with an oar he finds in the bottom of the boat.

Cassio goes over to Desdemona. She opens her eyes.

CASSIO: "Gee, honey, you certainly did scare me. I thought you was dead."

They kiss. FADE OUT.

SECOND PRIZE

Scenario of MOOR

Slow unfolding of characters' names (the Italian corrected) in Gothic script.

Hot jazz opening in cocktail bar of Danieli. Jean Harlow's party object to presence of two "niggers." Management explain that they are really distinguished Arabs from Tripoli, guests of the Italian Government. Yankees leave, snubbed. Ali (sheik type) follows Jean Harlow on to balcony and explains in charmingly bad English, "You talk to us like that—forgetting what once happened here, in this Venice. . . ." Jean fascinated, but does not understand. So, in a gondola (underlying music of waltz, "Gondola Dreams") he tells her of Othello. . . .

. . . and the two fade into Otello himself telling his story to Desdemona while Brabanzio, gaga, snores on the cushions. This cavalcade of his past life is shown to us. It begins in the palace gardens at Algiers, with a little baby Otello (Othman really) playing among the palms and fountains. His dying mother gives him the strawberry-spotted hankie. Then he is a young warrior, captured. He escapes to Arabia (gum trees) and India (pearl fisheries), to Istambul (reveries by the Pontic Sea), Aleppo (half-Christian in sympathies now, he rescues Graziano from a malignant Turk), Rhodes and Cyprus (meets Iago and distinguishes himself fighting against the Turks); and finally reaches Venice where honours and wealth await him.

Otello's techni-colourful wooing continues at the carnival, at the sea marriage ceremony, at a hawking party, beneath the Colleoni

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statue, during a moonlit excursion to mad Barbara's grave and at a picnic at Chioggia. Spellbound, Desdemona cuts all "the wealthy curled darlings of the nation," including Stan Laurel (Rodrigo).

During a rough house at Il Sagittario, Otello protects Emilia from insult, but his chivalry is evilly misinterpreted by Iago who is also vexed because Bianca has left him for Cassio and because Cassio has just received promotion.

From now onwards Shakespeare's text followed but at a breathless tempo.

Magnificent photography of Turkish fleet bearing down on Cyprus—immense white sails and clouds, wine-dark sea.

Effective contrast of whoopee in Famagusta piazzas and passion *ad lib* in nuptial chamber high above the town.

Otello does not quite kill himself and is hooted out of Famagusta by the mob. He returns to his original loin-cloth loneliness, silhouetted against the sunset together with the minarets and the palms. "Gondola Dreams" brings us back across the centuries. . . .

. . . to Jean Harlow and her Arab, who defy the colour-bar in a final throbbing close-up of platinum hair on sooty bosom.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 86.—FARMER NUMERO

"I direct," wrote old farmer Numero (who took a delight in puzzling "they lawyers") "that my pigs, my sheep, my cattle and my horses be divided among my four sons in such proportions as the dispositions hereinafter set out require. When the division has been effected, Reuben will have more horses than Enoch; Enoch more horses than Seth; and Seth more horses than Malachi. But the total head of sheep, cattle and horses taken by each of the four, will be twenty-five; and the number of each legatee's sheep, divided by the number of his cattle, when added to the product of the number of his horses and the number of his pigs, will total exactly one hundred."

Farmer Numero left 39 *pigs. How many beasts of each description did his four sons respectively receive?*

PROBLEM 84.—KIND DR. PEDDERGOGG

Let Jim's age on the first occasion be a years.
Let Stanley's age on the first occasion be b years.
Let the number of years between the two occasions be n.
Then Dr. Peddergogg the first time paid
$(a^3 - b^3)$ pennies.

And the second time he paid $(a + n)^3 - (b + n)^3$ pennies.
i.e. $(a^3 + 3a^2n + 3an^2 + n^3 - b^3 - 3b^2n - 3bn^2 - n^3)$ pennies.
Hence $3n(a^2 + an - bn - b^2) = 720$
or $n(a - b)(a + b + n) = 240$
By trial, there are eight solutions of this equation in integers:

n	a	b
1	26	21
5	22	21
2	30	28
2	16	12
4	14	10
*2	12	6
6	8	6
3	9	4

But inspection will show that only the solution marked * admits of an exact division of the sum paid out on the first occasion. Hence the boys were then 12 and 6, the period was 2 years ago, and the boys' ages are now:

Jim = 14
Stanley = 8

PROBLEM 83.—THREE DICE

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: A. H. A. Hogg, The Pines, Tadworth, Surrey.

There were 74 correct solutions.

Seven points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

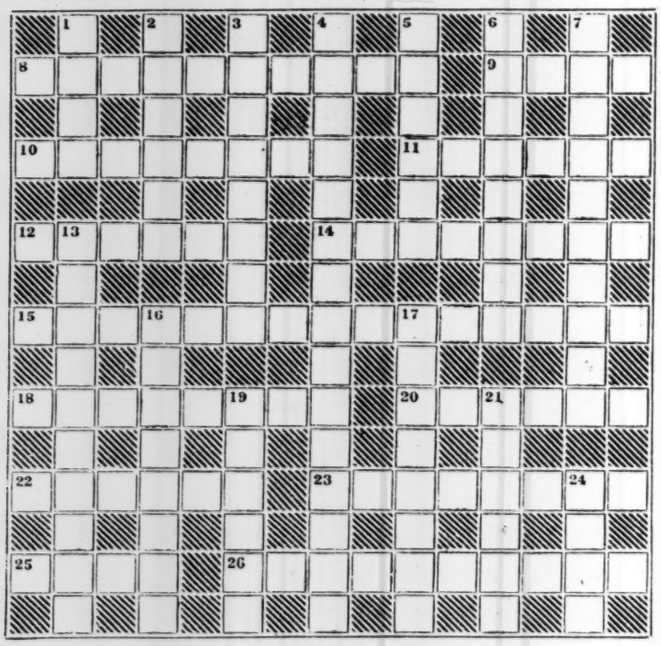
In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points, a solver is entitled to a prize, consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value no greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope; but on separate sheets of paper.

Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 232

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday.



Set by L.-S.

The winner of last week's crossword is
James L. McLaren, 710 Clarkston Road, Netherlee, Glasgow

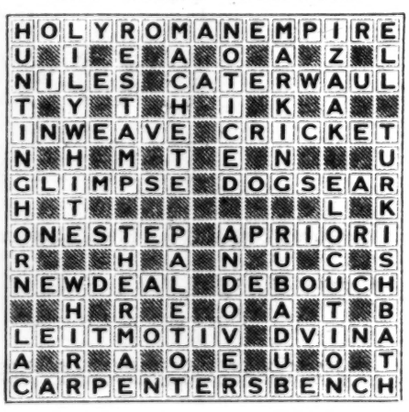
ACROSS

8. He came home again poetically.
9. When spurred changes from fauna to flora.
10. Her nurse's name for drugged Juliet.
11. Russian copper.
12. You seem to have been in a train smash.
14. The Nile flows into the ends of this water pipe.
15. Kinds of change for present spending.
18. Formerly the top of the tree for an Indian officer.
20. Hebrew scholiasts' notes to Holy Writ.
22. Sportsman allied to the grouser?
23. This was not one of the possible roads to Loch Lomond.
25. Part of Carlisle that keeps its head above water.
26. Not necessarily the cause of competitors scratching.

DOWN

1. Should be securely buttoned.
2. That is short of women's underwear.
3. The blade's home.
4. The newsagent will hand you a mixed drink if you ask for this.
5. Repeat for the backward.
6. Suggests that one would have a firmer foothold barefoot.
7. This worker's function is not that of an architectural hen.
13. Serviceable state.
16. Ravenous—as a gang of rooks one might think.
17. Beat.
19. Presumably not the sort of tulip for a little house.
21. 100 of the last make the initial if you add 2 lines.
24. And it carries a wood fire.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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